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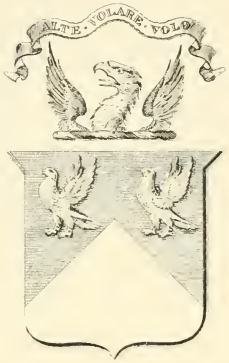

H. Morse Stephens

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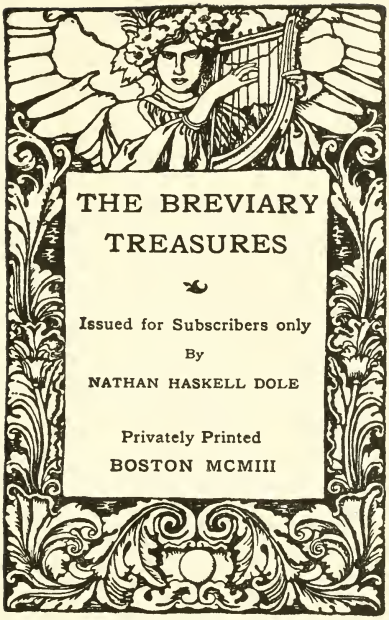
WIT AND WISDOM OF EPICTETUS



THE BREVIARY TREASURES

Issued for Subscribers only

By

NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

Privately Printed

BOSTON MCMIII

B560
E5D6

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HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

INTRODUCTION

St. Augustine called Epictetus the most noble of Stoics, and if we may judge of him by the utterances recorded by his disciple, Flavius Arrian, who took them down from his lips at Nicopolis, we cannot help agreeing with this encomium. Arrian declares that they were not put into literary form, were merely "such things as one man might say to another on occasion," but that they represent the highest thought of the Master who, when he spoke, had but one aim — "to stir his hearers' minds toward the best things."

Almost nothing is known of Epictetus' life. He was born in Hieropolis, near the Phrygian Meander. He became the slave of Epaphroditus, whose character may be surmised when it is stated that he was the favourite of the Emperor Nero. There is a legend to the effect that Epaphroditus, who had himself been a slave, was twisting Epictetus' leg for

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amusement. Epictetus remarked, "If you persist, you will break my leg." Epaphroditus went on and broke the leg. Epictetus' only comment was: "Did I not warn you that you would break my leg?"

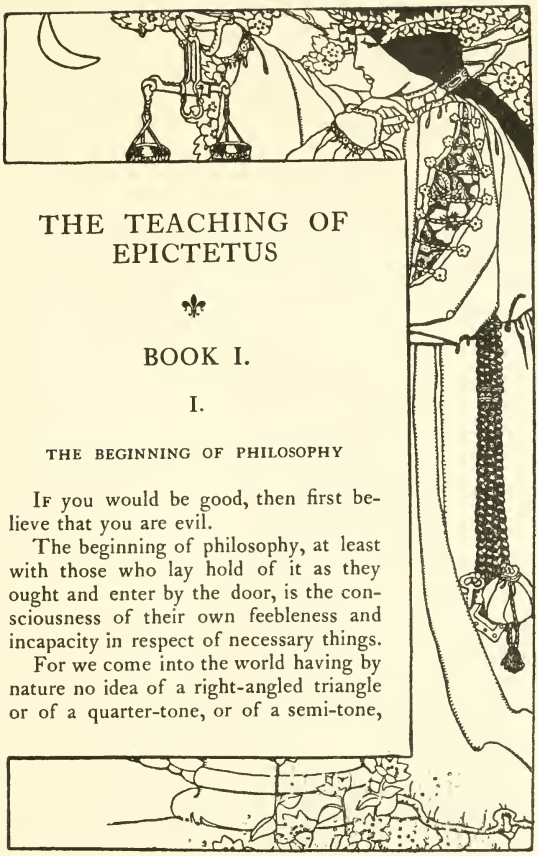
However cruelly the master may have treated the slave, he sent him to attend the lectures on philosophy by Musonius Rufus, the son of a Roman knight, and a very celebrated Stoic, whose works have unfortunately all perished. Just as Russian noblemen used to have poets and musicians among their serfs, so the Romans were proud to attach philosophers and scholars to their retinues. Often, undoubtedly, the prisoner of war, sold as a slave, may have been a man of more consequence than his fortuitous owner. Nero, whose cruelties and excesses were beginning to stir the Romans to revolt, committed suicide with the aid of Epaphroditus in 67 A. D. Epaphroditus himself was put to death by Domitian, and when that cruel emperor expelled all the philosophers from Rome with the exception of Muso-

nius Rufus, Epictetus went to Nicopolis, the city of Augustus, at the southwestern extremity of Epirus. Here he lived to a venerable old age in spite of his feeble health and his lameness. He is said to have been true to his own teachings, to have lived with the utmost simplicity, with no servant or other inmate of his house. A story illustrating his kindness of heart relates how he rescued an infant that had been exposed to death by some parent who had wished to check the growth of his family. Epictetus took the child and hired a nurse to care for it and brought it up.

The philosophy of Stoicism, as expounded in the fragmentary sentences of Epictetus, is unquestionably conducive to a happy life, a life of serenity. It is not strange that Epictetus should have been adopted by the Christian Church: the Encheiridion or Handbook has the distinction of being the only pagan book recommended to the religious. It deserves it. For it certainly helps men to be manly, to endure afflictions without repining, to take life as it comes, to be

simple and duly humble, to be sympathetic and unselfish. Its teachings are inspiring. Such a book as this, coming down to us through nineteen centuries, is indeed a breviary treasure to be commended for reading and meditation.

N. H. D.



THE TEACHING OF EPICTETUS

BOOK I.

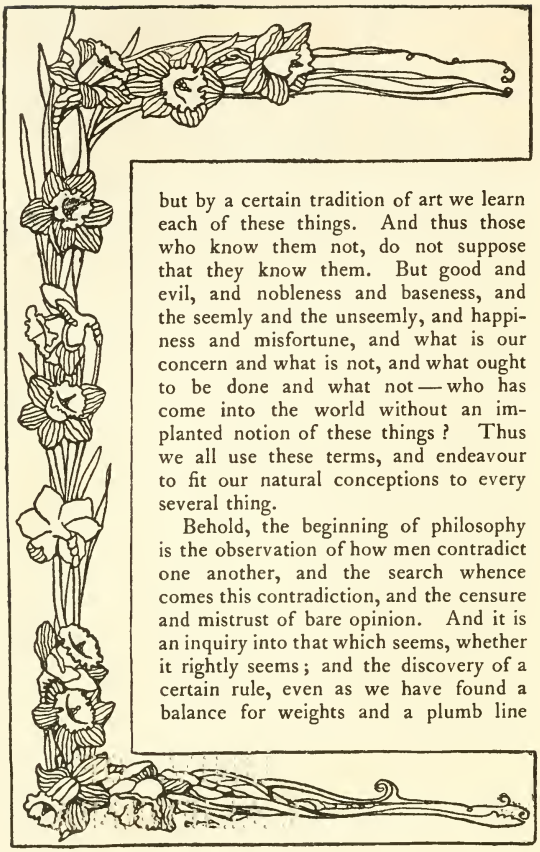
I.

THE BEGINNING OF PHILOSOPHY

If you would be good, then first believe that you are evil.

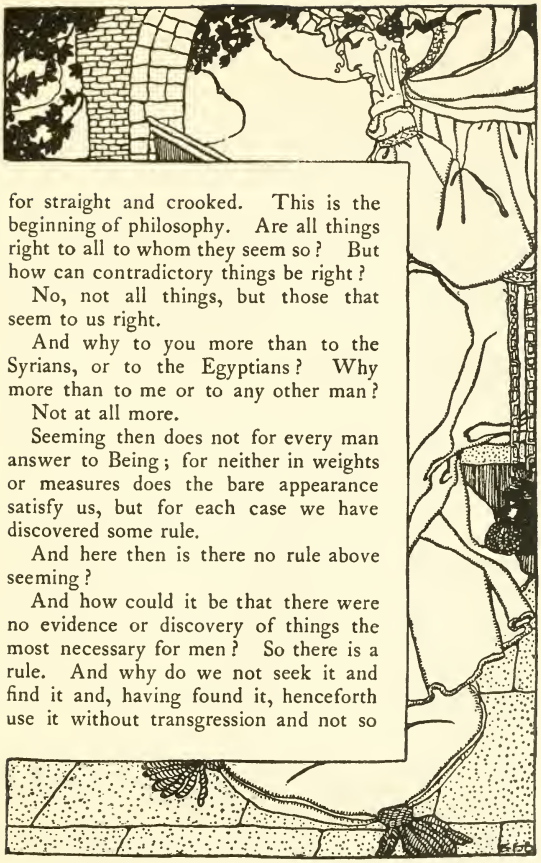
The beginning of philosophy, at least with those who lay hold of it as they ought and enter by the door, is the consciousness of their own feebleness and incapacity in respect of necessary things.

For we come into the world having by nature no idea of a right-angled triangle or of a quarter-tone, or of a semi-tone,



but by a certain tradition of art we learn each of these things. And thus those who know them not, do not suppose that they know them. But good and evil, and nobleness and baseness, and the seemly and the unseemly, and happiness and misfortune, and what is our concern and what is not, and what ought to be done and what not — who has come into the world without an implanted notion of these things? Thus we all use these terms, and endeavour to fit our natural conceptions to every several thing.

Behold, the beginning of philosophy is the observation of how men contradict one another, and the search whence comes this contradiction, and the censure and mistrust of bare opinion. And it is an inquiry into that which seems, whether it rightly seems; and the discovery of a certain rule, even as we have found a balance for weights and a plumb line



for straight and crooked. This is the beginning of philosophy. Are all things right to all to whom they seem so? But how can contradictory things be right?

No, not all things, but those that seem to us right.

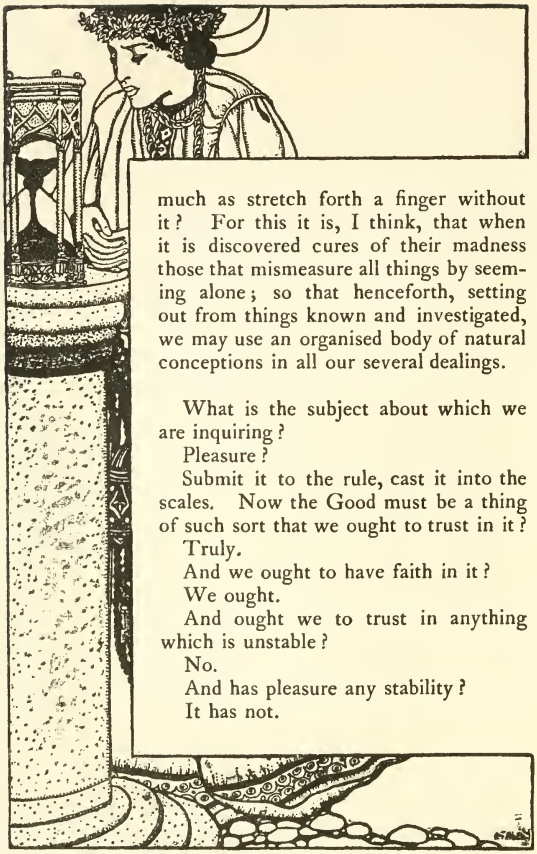
And why to you more than to the Syrians, or to the Egyptians? Why more than to me or to any other man?

Not at all more.

Seeming then does not for every man answer to Being; for neither in weights or measures does the bare appearance satisfy us, but for each case we have discovered some rule.

And here then is there no rule above seeming?

And how could it be that there were no evidence or discovery of things the most necessary for men? So there is a rule. And why do we not seek it and find it and, having found it, henceforth use it without transgression and not so



much as stretch forth a finger without it? For this it is, I think, that when it is discovered cures of their madness those that mismeasure all things by seeming alone; so that henceforth, setting out from things known and investigated, we may use an organised body of natural conceptions in all our several dealings.

What is the subject about which we are inquiring?

Pleasure?

Submit it to the rule, cast it into the scales. Now the Good must be a thing of such sort that we ought to trust in it?

Truly.

And we ought to have faith in it?

We ought.

And ought we to trust in anything which is unstable?

No.

And has pleasure any stability?

It has not.

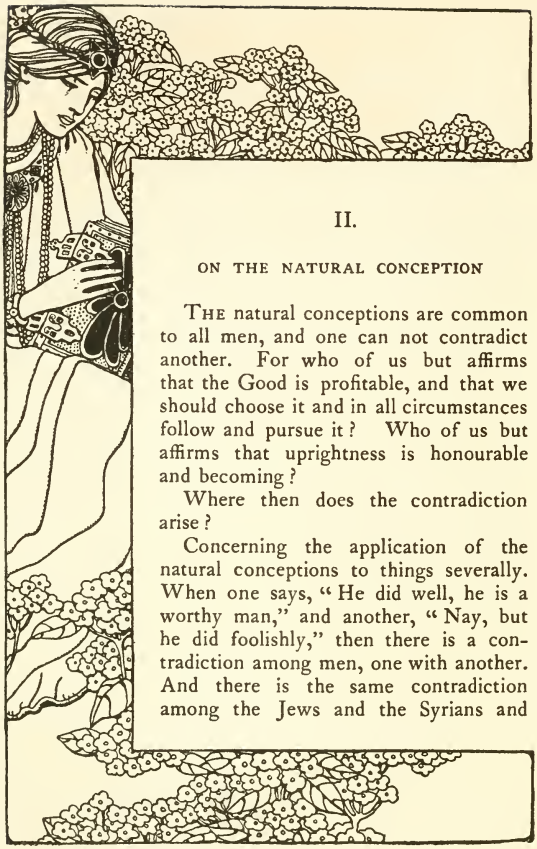
Take it then and fling it out of the scales and set it far away from the place of the Good.

But if you are dim of sight and one balance does not suffice, then take another.

Is it right to be elated in what is good?

Yes.

And is it right to be elated in the presence of a pleasure? See to it that thou say not it is right; or I shall not hold thee worthy even of the balance. Thus are things judged and weighed when the rules are held in readiness. And the aim of philosophy is this: to examine and establish the rules. And to use them when they are known is the task of an wise and good man.



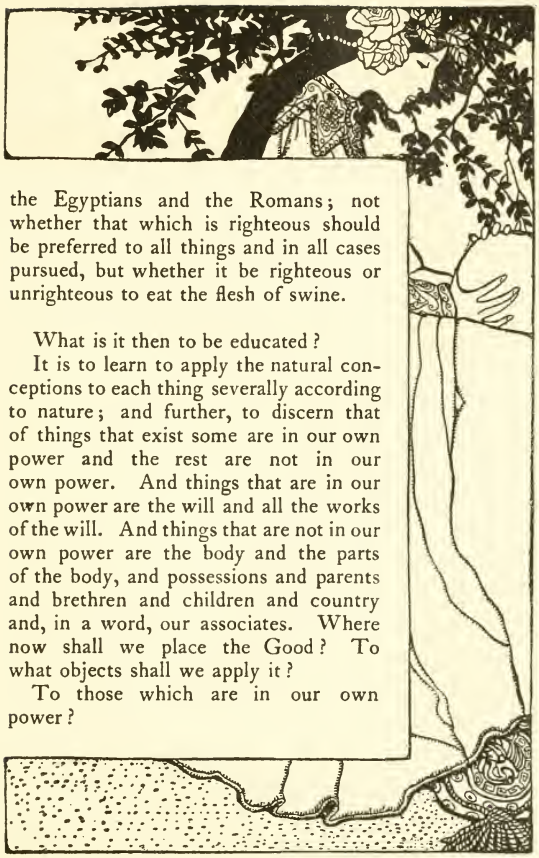
II.

ON THE NATURAL CONCEPTION

THE natural conceptions are common to all men, and one can not contradict another. For who of us but affirms that the Good is profitable, and that we should choose it and in all circumstances follow and pursue it? Who of us but affirms that uprightness is honourable and becoming?

Where then does the contradiction arise?

Concerning the application of the natural conceptions to things severally. When one says, "He did well, he is a worthy man," and another, "Nay, but he did foolishly," then there is a contradiction among men, one with another. And there is the same contradiction among the Jews and the Syrians and

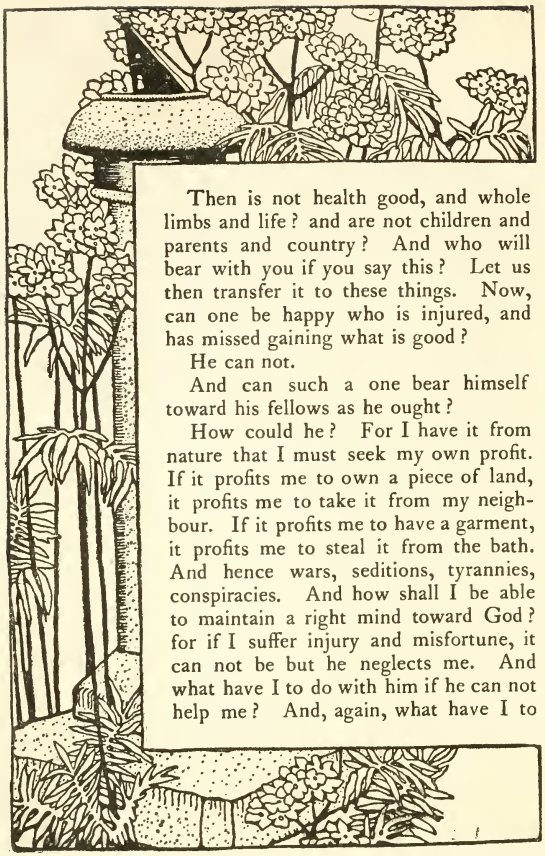


the Egyptians and the Romans; not whether that which is righteous should be preferred to all things and in all cases pursued, but whether it be righteous or unrighteous to eat the flesh of swine.

What is it then to be educated?

It is to learn to apply the natural conceptions to each thing severally according to nature; and further, to discern that of things that exist some are in our own power and the rest are not in our own power. And things that are in our own power are the will and all the works of the will. And things that are not in our own power are the body and the parts of the body, and possessions and parents and brethren and children and country and, in a word, our associates. Where now shall we place the Good? To what objects shall we apply it?

To those which are in our own power?

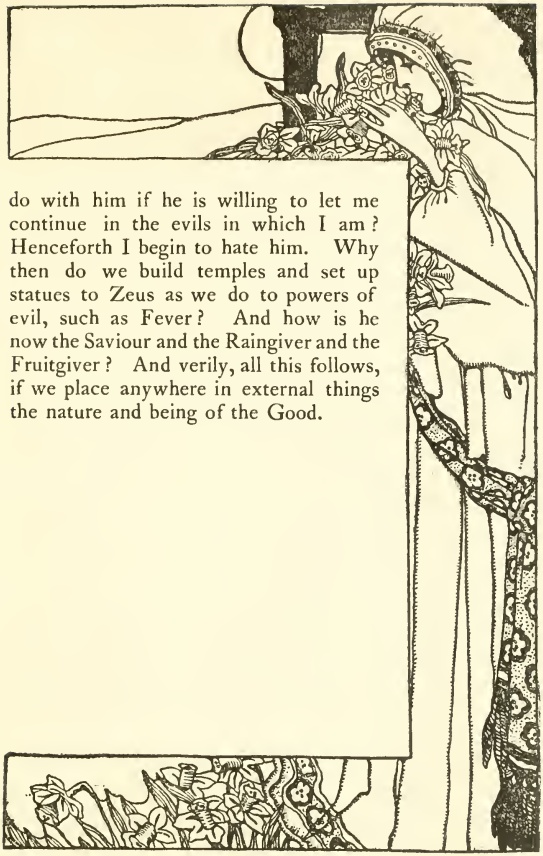


Then is not health good, and whole limbs and life? and are not children and parents and country? And who will bear with you if you say this? Let us then transfer it to these things. Now, can one be happy who is injured, and has missed gaining what is good?

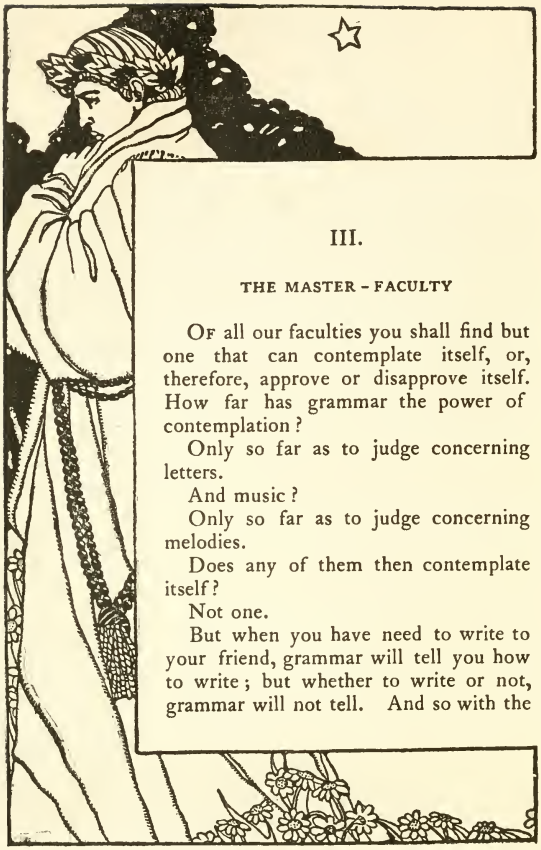
He can not.

And can such a one bear himself toward his fellows as he ought?

How could he? For I have it from nature that I must seek my own profit. If it profits me to own a piece of land, it profits me to take it from my neighbour. If it profits me to have a garment, it profits me to steal it from the bath. And hence wars, seditions, tyrannies, conspiracies. And how shall I be able to maintain a right mind toward God? for if I suffer injury and misfortune, it can not be but he neglects me. And what have I to do with him if he can not help me? And, again, what have I to



do with him if he is willing to let me continue in the evils in which I am? Henceforth I begin to hate him. Why then do we build temples and set up statues to Zeus as we do to powers of evil, such as Fever? And how is he now the Saviour and the Raingiver and the Fruitgiver? And verily, all this follows, if we place anywhere in external things the nature and being of the Good.



III.

THE MASTER - FACULTY

Of all our faculties you shall find but one that can contemplate itself, or, therefore, approve or disapprove itself. How far has grammar the power of contemplation?

Only so far as to judge concerning letters.

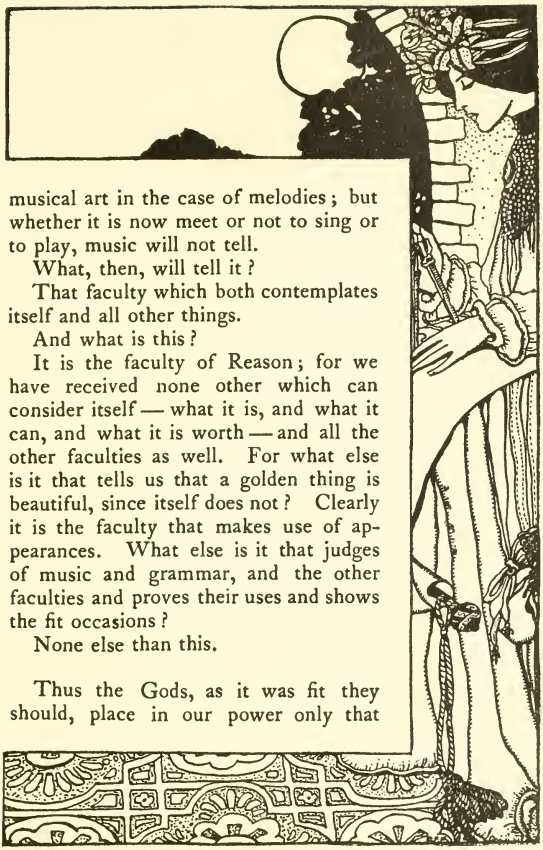
And music?

Only so far as to judge concerning melodies.

Does any of them then contemplate itself?

Not one.

But when you have need to write to your friend, grammar will tell you how to write; but whether to write or not, grammar will not tell. And so with the



musical art in the case of melodies; but whether it is now meet or not to sing or to play, music will not tell.

What, then, will tell it?

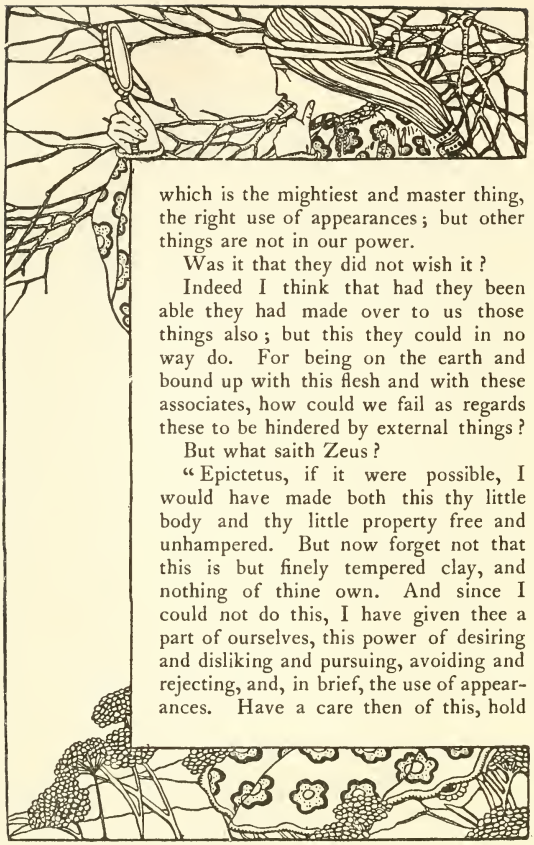
That faculty which both contemplates itself and all other things.

And what is this?

It is the faculty of Reason; for we have received none other which can consider itself — what it is, and what it can, and what it is worth — and all the other faculties as well. For what else is it that tells us that a golden thing is beautiful, since itself does not? Clearly it is the faculty that makes use of appearances. What else is it that judges of music and grammar, and the other faculties and proves their uses and shows the fit occasions?

None else than this.

Thus the Gods, as it was fit they should, place in our power only that



which is the mightiest and master thing, the right use of appearances; but other things are not in our power.

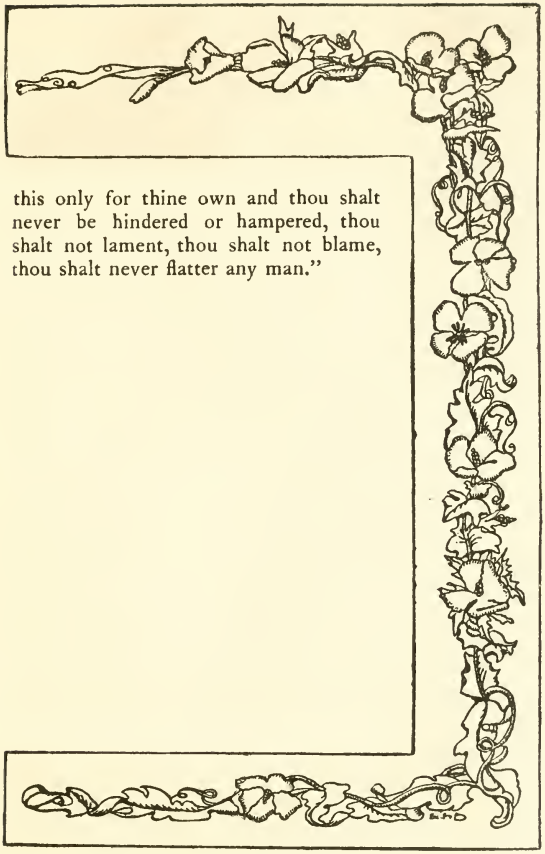
Was it that they did not wish it?

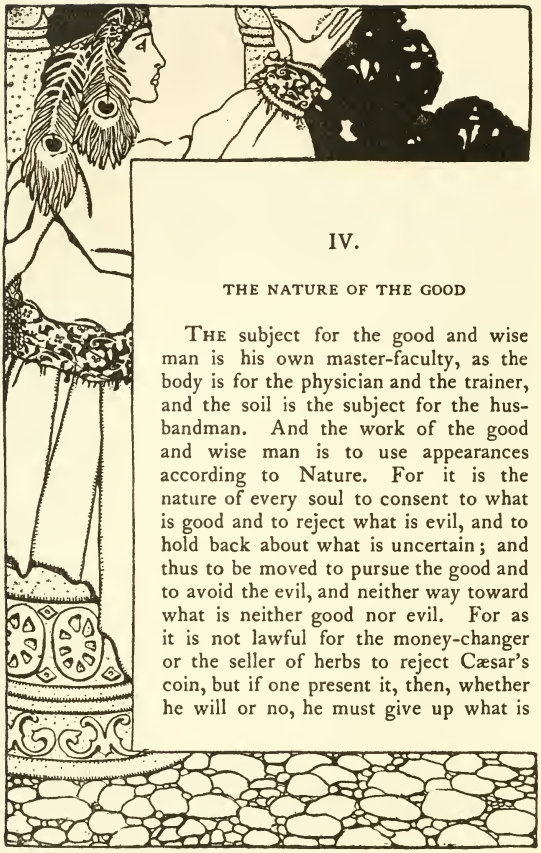
Indeed I think that had they been able they had made over to us those things also; but this they could in no way do. For being on the earth and bound up with this flesh and with these associates, how could we fail as regards these to be hindered by external things?

But what saith Zeus?

"Epictetus, if it were possible, I would have made both this thy little body and thy little property free and unhampered. But now forget not that this is but finely tempered clay, and nothing of thine own. And since I could not do this, I have given thee a part of ourselves, this power of desiring and disliking and pursuing, avoiding and rejecting, and, in brief, the use of appearances. Have a care then of this, hold

this only for thine own and thou shalt never be hindered or hampered, thou shalt not lament, thou shalt not blame, thou shalt never flatter any man."

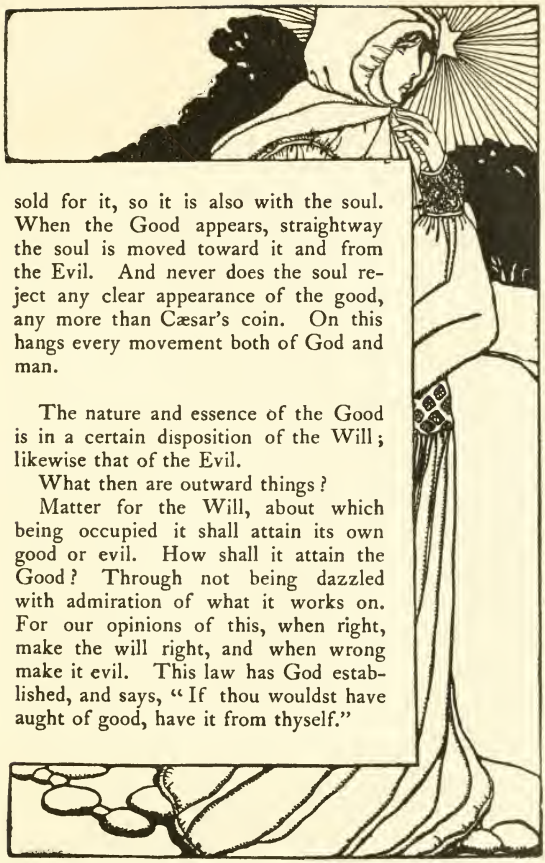




IV.

THE NATURE OF THE GOOD

The subject for the good and wise man is his own master-faculty, as the body is for the physician and the trainer, and the soil is the subject for the husbandman. And the work of the good and wise man is to use appearances according to Nature. For it is the nature of every soul to consent to what is good and to reject what is evil, and to hold back about what is uncertain; and thus to be moved to pursue the good and to avoid the evil, and neither way toward what is neither good nor evil. For as it is not lawful for the money-changer or the seller of herbs to reject Cæsar's coin, but if one present it, then, whether he will or no, he must give up what is

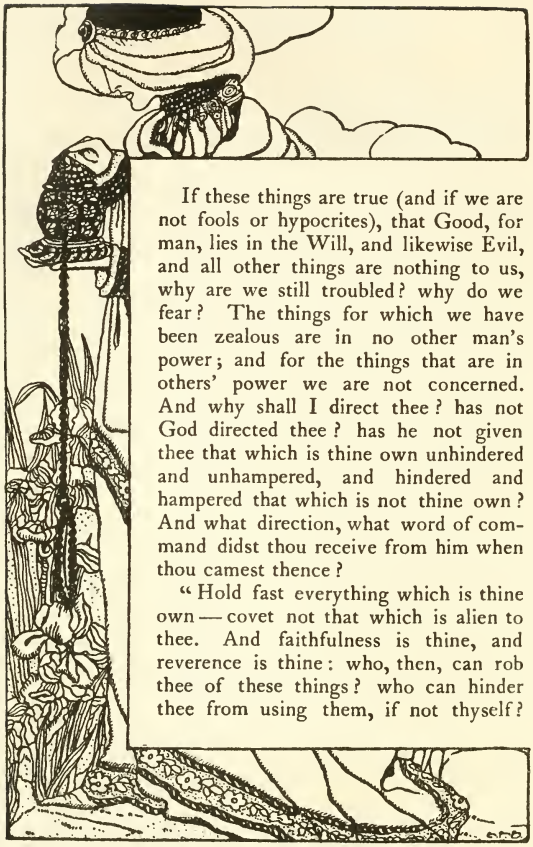


sold for it, so it is also with the soul. When the Good appears, straightway the soul is moved toward it and from the Evil. And never does the soul reject any clear appearance of the good, any more than Cæsar's coin. On this hangs every movement both of God and man.

The nature and essence of the Good is in a certain disposition of the Will; likewise that of the Evil.

What then are outward things?

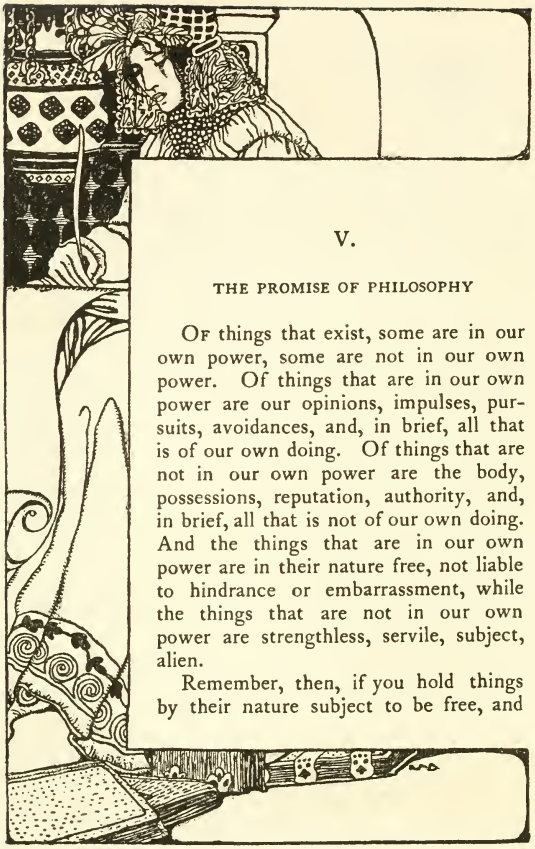
Matter for the Will, about which being occupied it shall attain its own good or evil. How shall it attain the Good? Through not being dazzled with admiration of what it works on. For our opinions of this, when right, make the will right, and when wrong make it evil. This law has God established, and says, "If thou wouldst have aught of good, have it from thyself."



If these things are true (and if we are not fools or hypocrites), that Good, for man, lies in the Will, and likewise Evil, and all other things are nothing to us, why are we still troubled? why do we fear? The things for which we have been zealous are in no other man's power; and for the things that are in others' power we are not concerned. And why shall I direct thee? has not God directed thee? has he not given thee that which is thine own unhindered and unhampered, and hindered and hampered that which is not thine own? And what direction, what word of command didst thou receive from him when thou camest thence?

"Hold fast everything which is thine own — covet not that which is alien to thee. And faithfulness is thine, and reverence is thine: who, then, can rob thee of these things? who can hinder thee from using them, if not thyself?

But thyself can do it, and how? When thou art zealous about things not thine own, and hast cast away the things that are."

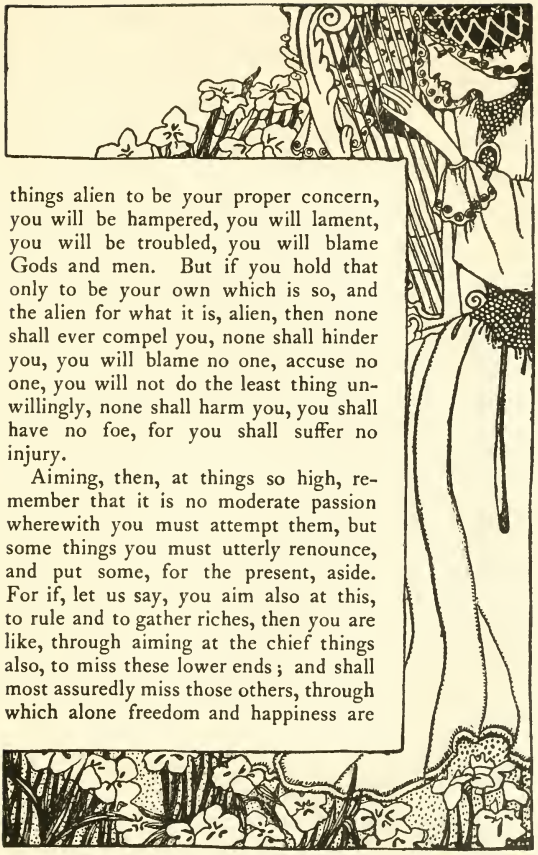


V.

THE PROMISE OF PHILOSOPHY

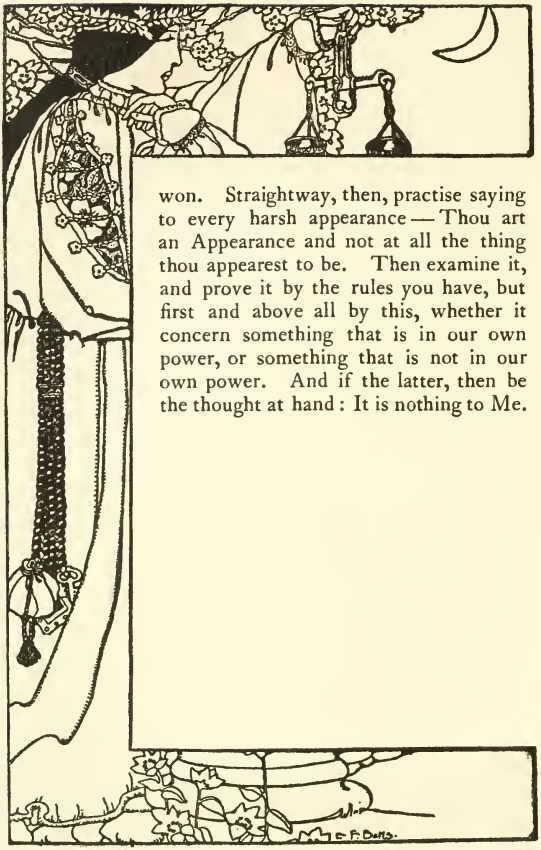
Of things that exist, some are in our own power, some are not in our own power. Of things that are in our own power are our opinions, impulses, pursuits, avoidances, and, in brief, all that is of our own doing. Of things that are not in our own power are the body, possessions, reputation, authority, and, in brief, all that is not of our own doing. And the things that are in our own power are in their nature free, not liable to hindrance or embarrassment, while the things that are not in our own power are strengthless, servile, subject, alien.

Remember, then, if you hold things by their nature subject to be free, and



things alien to be your proper concern, you will be hampered, you will lament, you will be troubled, you will blame Gods and men. But if you hold that only to be your own which is so, and the alien for what it is, alien, then none shall ever compel you, none shall hinder you, you will blame no one, accuse no one, you will not do the least thing unwillingly, none shall harm you, you shall have no foe, for you shall suffer no injury.

Aiming, then, at things so high, remember that it is no moderate passion wherewith you must attempt them, but some things you must utterly renounce, and put some, for the present, aside. For if, let us say, you aim also at this, to rule and to gather riches, then you are like, through aiming at the chief things also, to miss these lower ends; and shall most assuredly miss those others, through which alone freedom and happiness are



won. Straightway, then, practise saying to every harsh appearance — Thou art an Appearance and not at all the thing thou appearest to be. Then examine it, and prove it by the rules you have, but first and above all by this, whether it concern something that is in our own power, or something that is not in our own power. And if the latter, then be the thought at hand: It is nothing to Me.

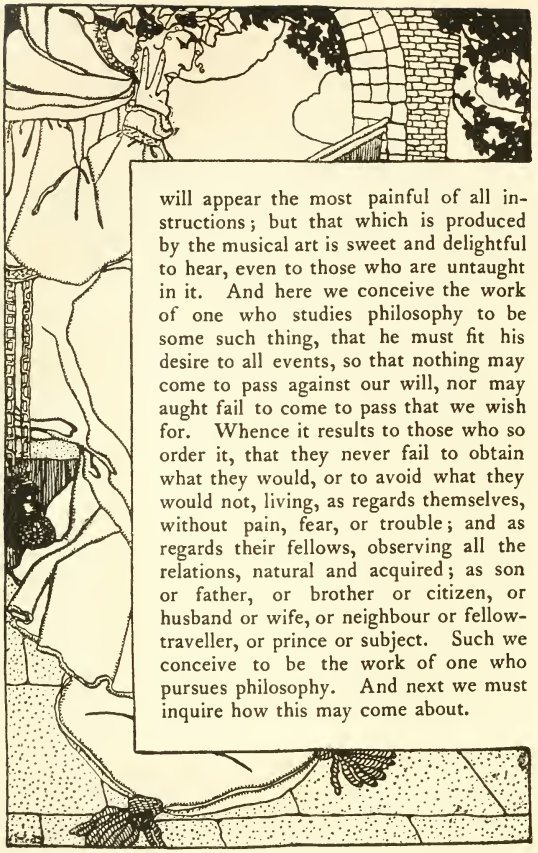
VI.

THE WAY OF PHILOSOPHY

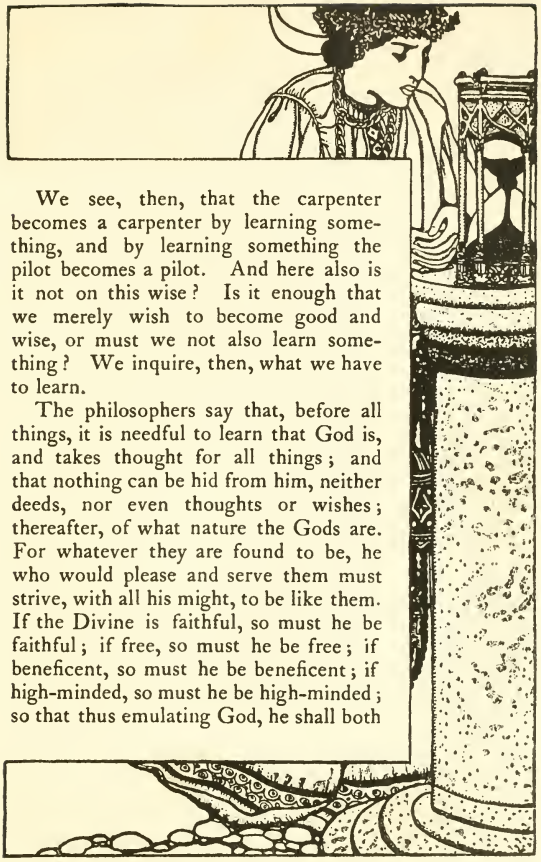
EVERY art is wearisome, in the learning of it, to the untaught and unskilled. Yet things that are made by the arts immediately declare their use, and for what they were made, and in most of them is something attractive and pleasing.

Thus when a shoemaker is learning his trade it is no pleasure to stand by and observe him, but the shoe is useful, and moreover not unpleasing to behold. The learning of a carpenter's trade is very grievous to an untaught person who happens to be present, but the work done declares the need of the art.

But far more is this seen in music, for if you are by where one is learning, it

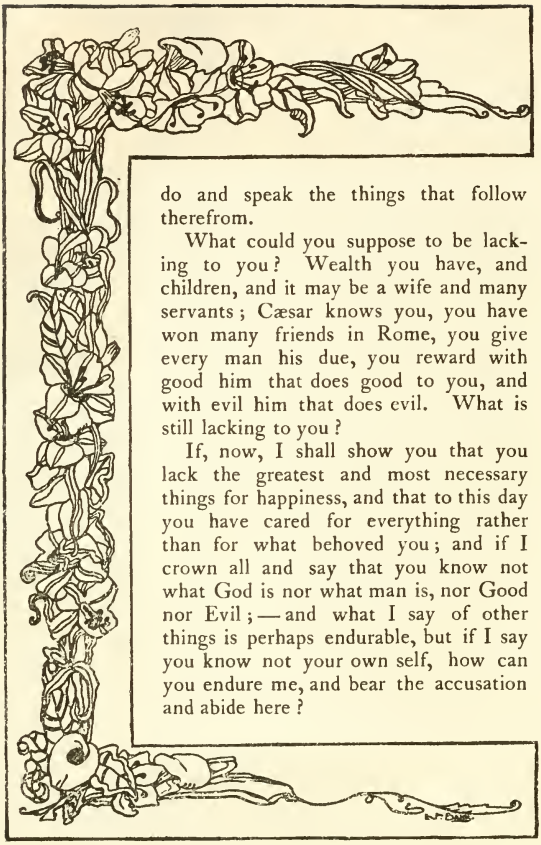


will appear the most painful of all instructions; but that which is produced by the musical art is sweet and delightful to hear, even to those who are untaught in it. And here we conceive the work of one who studies philosophy to be some such thing, that he must fit his desire to all events, so that nothing may come to pass against our will, nor may aught fail to come to pass that we wish for. Whence it results to those who so order it, that they never fail to obtain what they would, or to avoid what they would not, living, as regards themselves, without pain, fear, or trouble; and as regards their fellows, observing all the relations, natural and acquired; as son or father, or brother or citizen, or husband or wife, or neighbour or fellow-traveller, or prince or subject. Such we conceive to be the work of one who pursues philosophy. And next we must inquire how this may come about.



We see, then, that the carpenter becomes a carpenter by learning something, and by learning something the pilot becomes a pilot. And here also is it not on this wise? Is it enough that we merely wish to become good and wise, or must we not also learn something? We inquire, then, what we have to learn.

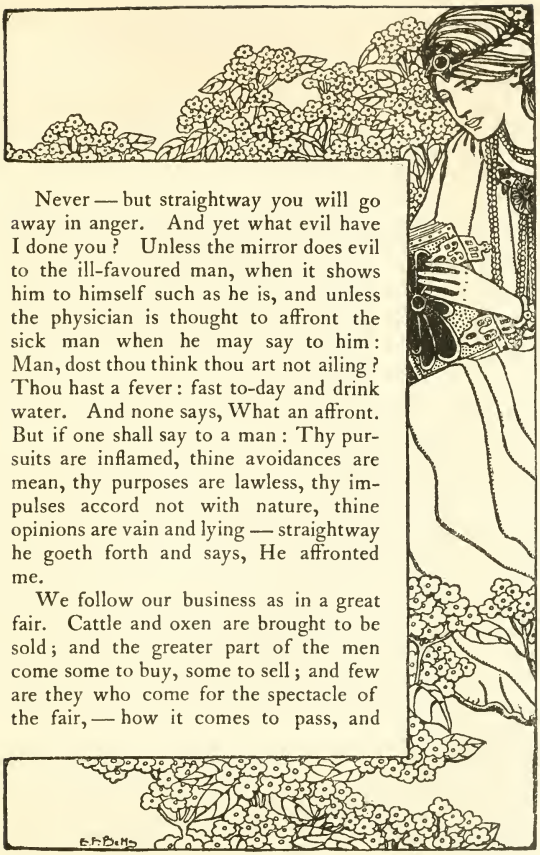
The philosophers say that, before all things, it is needful to learn that God is, and takes thought for all things; and that nothing can be hid from him, neither deeds, nor even thoughts or wishes; thereafter, of what nature the Gods are. For whatever they are found to be, he who would please and serve them must strive, with all his might, to be like them. If the Divine is faithful, so must he be faithful; if free, so must he be free; if beneficent, so must he be beneficent; if high-minded, so must he be high-minded; so that thus emulating God, he shall both



do and speak the things that follow therefrom.

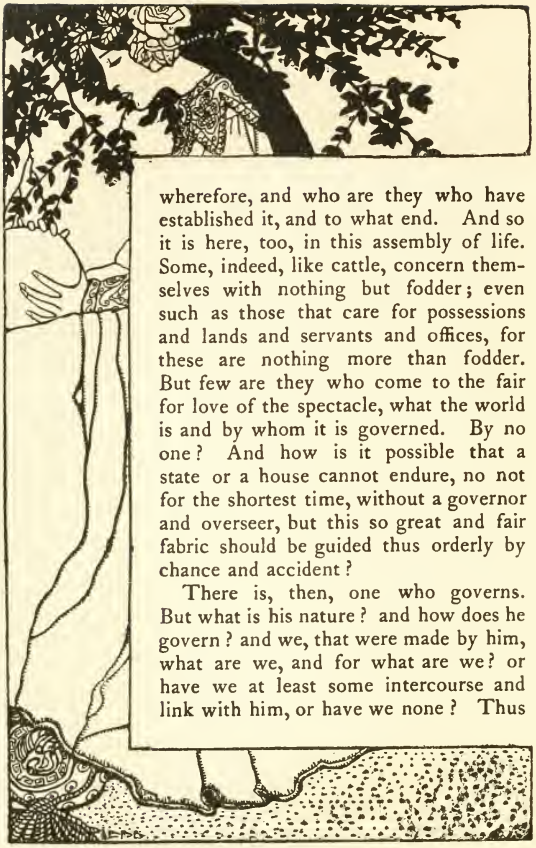
What could you suppose to be lacking to you? Wealth you have, and children, and it may be a wife and many servants; Cæsar knows you, you have won many friends in Rome, you give every man his due, you reward with good him that does good to you, and with evil him that does evil. What is still lacking to you?

If, now, I shall show you that you lack the greatest and most necessary things for happiness, and that to this day you have cared for everything rather than for what behoved you; and if I crown all and say that you know not what God is nor what man is, nor Good nor Evil; — and what I say of other things is perhaps endurable, but if I say you know not your own self, how can you endure me, and bear the accusation and abide here?



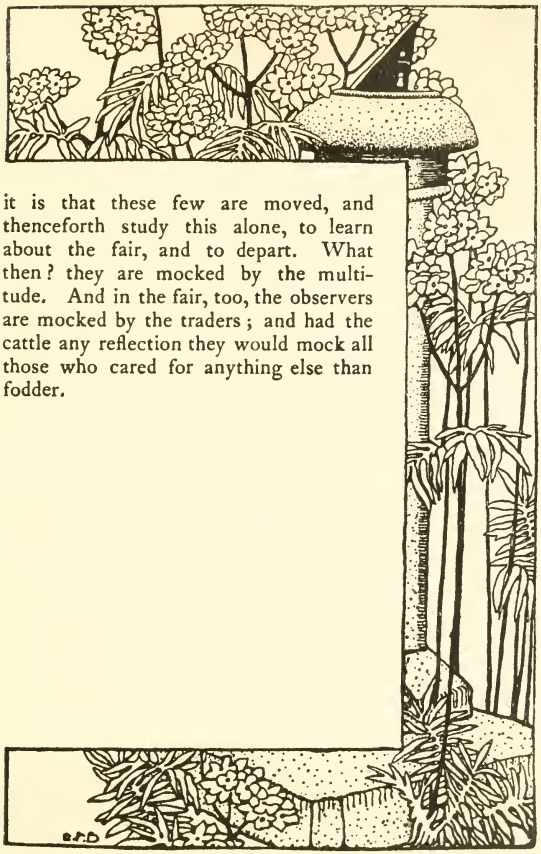
Never — but straightway you will go away in anger. And yet what evil have I done you? Unless the mirror does evil to the ill-favoured man, when it shows him to himself such as he is, and unless the physician is thought to affront the sick man when he may say to him: Man, dost thou think thou art not ailing? Thou hast a fever: fast to-day and drink water. And none says, What an affront. But if one shall say to a man: Thy pursuits are inflamed, thine avoidances are mean, thy purposes are lawless, thy impulses accord not with nature, thine opinions are vain and lying — straightway he goeth forth and says, He affronted me.

We follow our business as in a great fair. Cattle and oxen are brought to be sold; and the greater part of the men come some to buy, some to sell; and few are they who come for the spectacle of the fair, — how it comes to pass, and

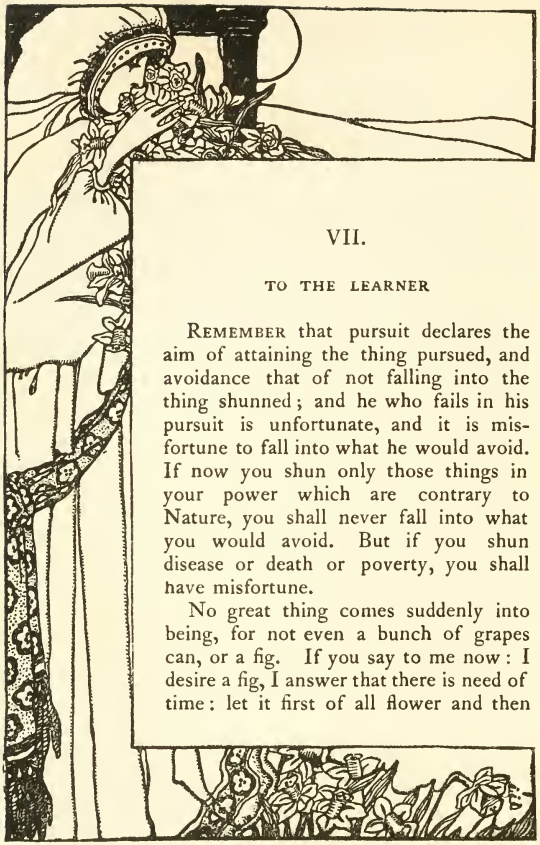


wherefore, and who are they who have established it, and to what end. And so it is here, too, in this assembly of life. Some, indeed, like cattle, concern themselves with nothing but fodder; even such as those that care for possessions and lands and servants and offices, for these are nothing more than fodder. But few are they who come to the fair for love of the spectacle, what the world is and by whom it is governed. By no one? And how is it possible that a state or a house cannot endure, no not for the shortest time, without a governor and overseer, but this so great and fair fabric should be guided thus orderly by chance and accident?

There is, then, one who governs. But what is his nature? and how does he govern? and we, that were made by him, what are we, and for what are we? or have we at least some intercourse and link with him, or have we none? Thus



it is that these few are moved, and thenceforth study this alone, to learn about the fair, and to depart. What then? they are mocked by the multitude. And in the fair, too, the observers are mocked by the traders; and had the cattle any reflection they would mock all those who cared for anything else than fodder.

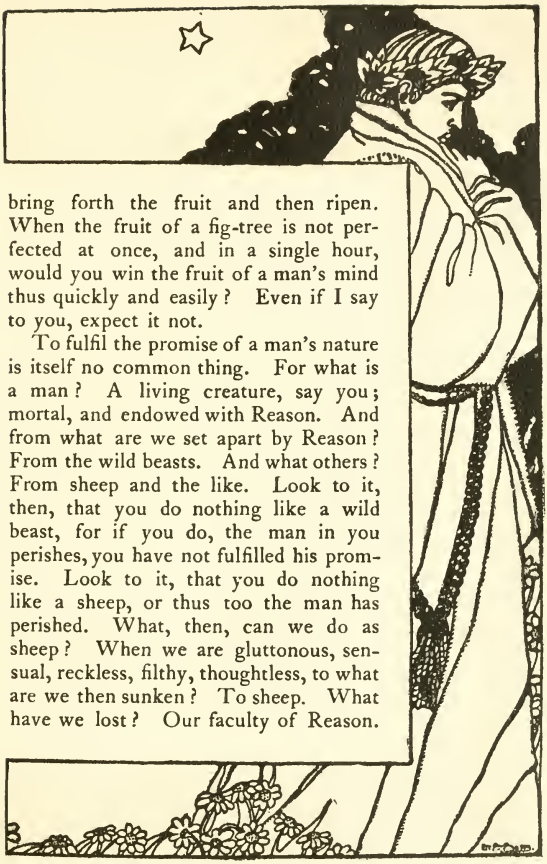


VII.

TO THE LEARNER

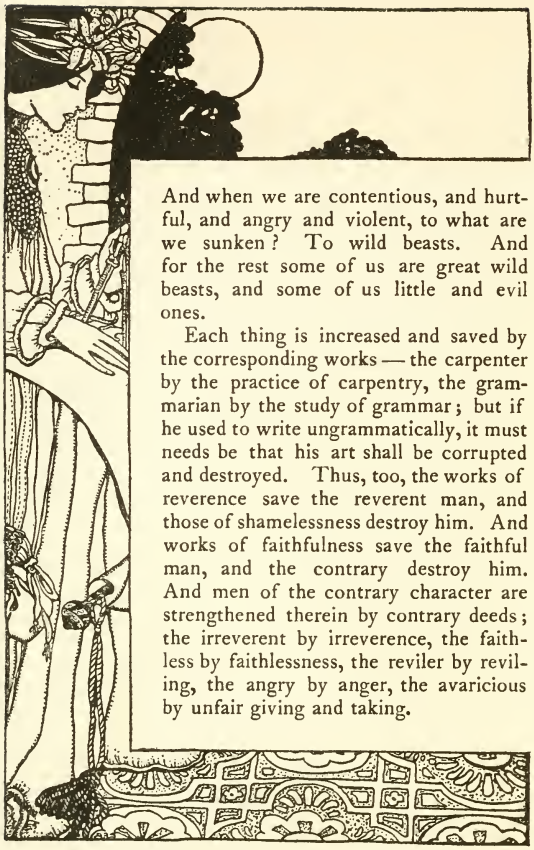
REMEMBER that pursuit declares the aim of attaining the thing pursued, and avoidance that of not falling into the thing shunned; and he who fails in his pursuit is unfortunate, and it is misfortune to fall into what he would avoid. If now you shun only those things in your power which are contrary to Nature, you shall never fall into what you would avoid. But if you shun disease or death or poverty, you shall have misfortune.

No great thing comes suddenly into being, for not even a bunch of grapes can, or a fig. If you say to me now: I desire a fig, I answer that there is need of time: let it first of all flower and then



bring forth the fruit and then ripen. When the fruit of a fig-tree is not perfected at once, and in a single hour, would you win the fruit of a man's mind thus quickly and easily? Even if I say to you, expect it not.

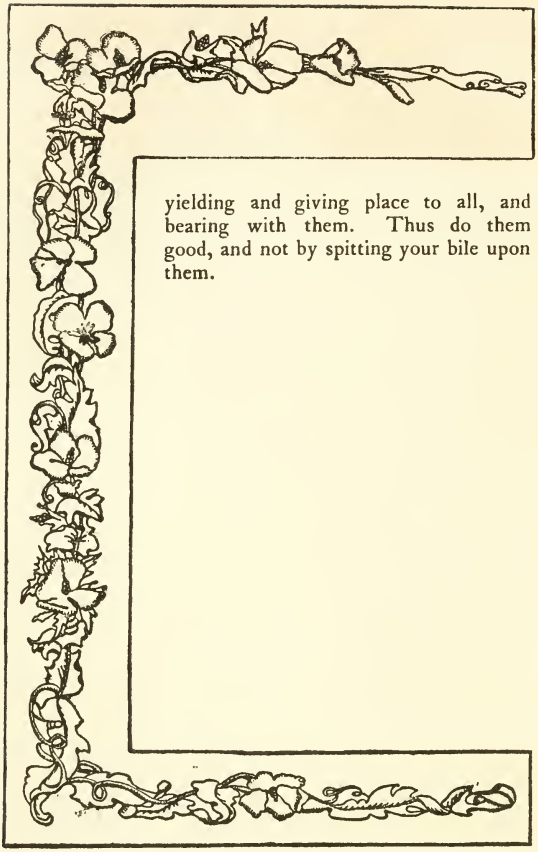
To fulfil the promise of a man's nature is itself no common thing. For what is a man? A living creature, say you; mortal, and endowed with Reason. And from what are we set apart by Reason? From the wild beasts. And what others? From sheep and the like. Look to it, then, that you do nothing like a wild beast, for if you do, the man in you perishes, you have not fulfilled his promise. Look to it, that you do nothing like a sheep, or thus too the man has perished. What, then, can we do as sheep? When we are gluttonous, sensual, reckless, filthy, thoughtless, to what are we then sunken? To sheep. What have we lost? Our faculty of Reason.



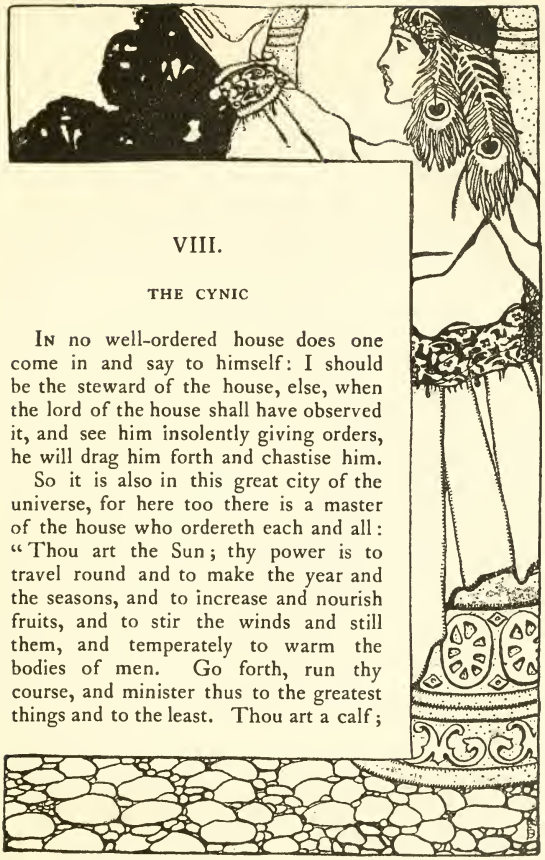
And when we are contentious, and hurtful, and angry and violent, to what are we sunken? To wild beasts. And for the rest some of us are great wild beasts, and some of us little and evil ones.

Each thing is increased and saved by the corresponding works — the carpenter by the practice of carpentry, the grammarian by the study of grammar; but if he used to write ungrammatically, it must needs be that his art shall be corrupted and destroyed. Thus, too, the works of reverence save the reverent man, and those of shamelessness destroy him. And works of faithfulness save the faithful man, and the contrary destroy him. And men of the contrary character are strengthened therein by contrary deeds; the irreverent by irreverence, the faithless by faithlessness, the reviler by reviling, the angry by anger, the avaricious by unfair giving and taking.

Every great power is perilous to beginners. You must bear such things according to your strength. But I must live according to Nature? That is not for a sick man. Lead your life as a sick man for a while, so that you may hereafter live it as a whole man. Fast, drink water, abstain for a while from pursuit of every kind, in order that you may pursue as Reason bids. And if as Reason bids, then when you have aught of good in you, your pursuit shall be well. Nay, but we would live as sages and do good to men. What good? What will you do? Have you done good to yourself? But you would exhort them? And have you exhorted yourself? You would do them good — then do not chatter to them, but show them in yourself what manner of men philosophy can make. In your eating do good to those that eat with you, in your drinking to those that drink, by



yielding and giving place to all, and bearing with them. Thus do them good, and not by spitting your bile upon them.

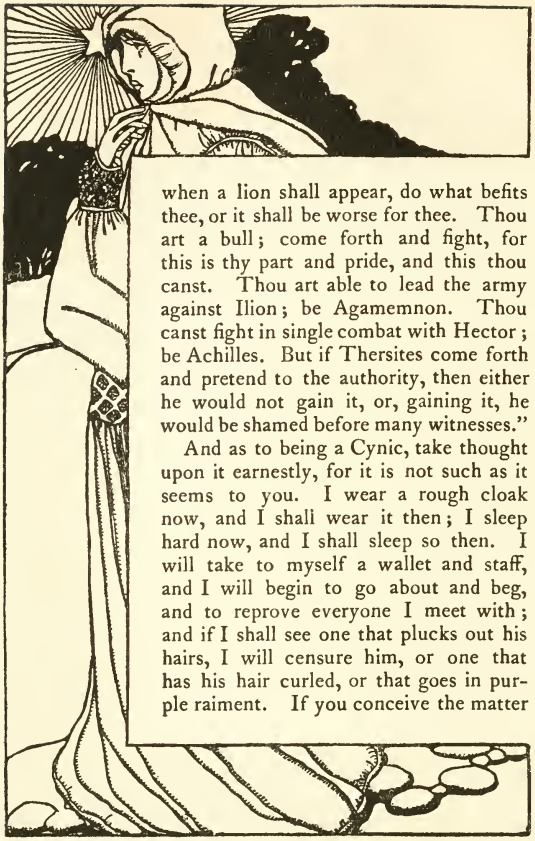


VIII.

THE CYNIC

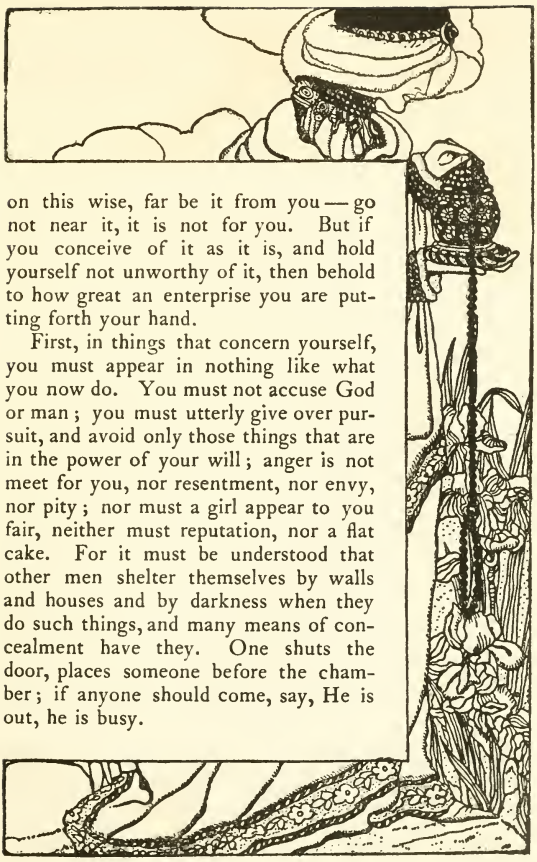
In no well-ordered house does one come in and say to himself: I should be the steward of the house, else, when the lord of the house shall have observed it, and see him insolently giving orders, he will drag him forth and chastise him.

So it is also in this great city of the universe, for here too there is a master of the house who ordereth each and all: "Thou art the Sun; thy power is to travel round and to make the year and the seasons, and to increase and nourish fruits, and to stir the winds and still them, and temperately to warm the bodies of men. Go forth, run thy course, and minister thus to the greatest things and to the least. Thou art a calf;



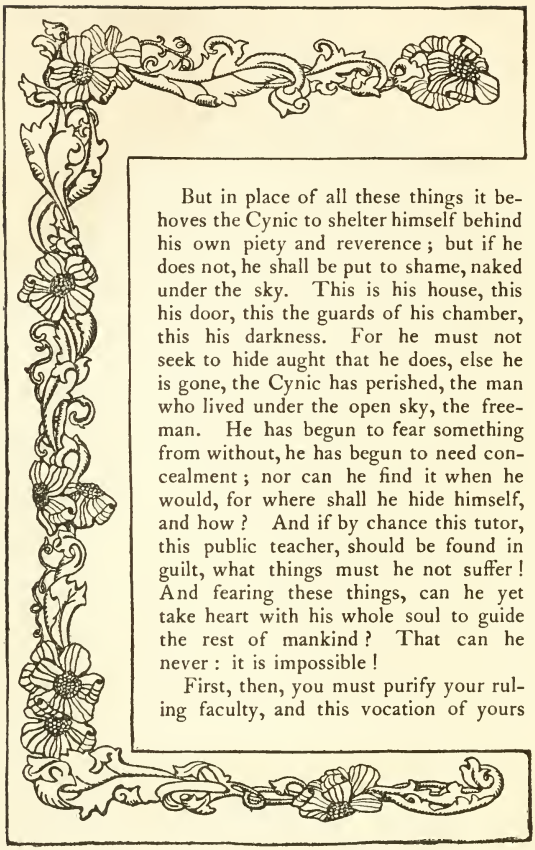
when a lion shall appear, do what befits thee, or it shall be worse for thee. Thou art a bull; come forth and fight, for this is thy part and pride, and this thou canst. Thou art able to lead the army against Ilion; be Agamemnon. Thou canst fight in single combat with Hector; be Achilles. But if Thersites come forth and pretend to the authority, then either he would not gain it, or, gaining it, he would be shamed before many witnesses."

And as to being a Cynic, take thought upon it earnestly, for it is not such as it seems to you. I wear a rough cloak now, and I shall wear it then; I sleep hard now, and I shall sleep so then. I will take to myself a wallet and staff, and I will begin to go about and beg, and to reprove everyone I meet with; and if I shall see one that plucks out his hairs, I will censure him, or one that has his hair curled, or that goes in purple raiment. If you conceive the matter



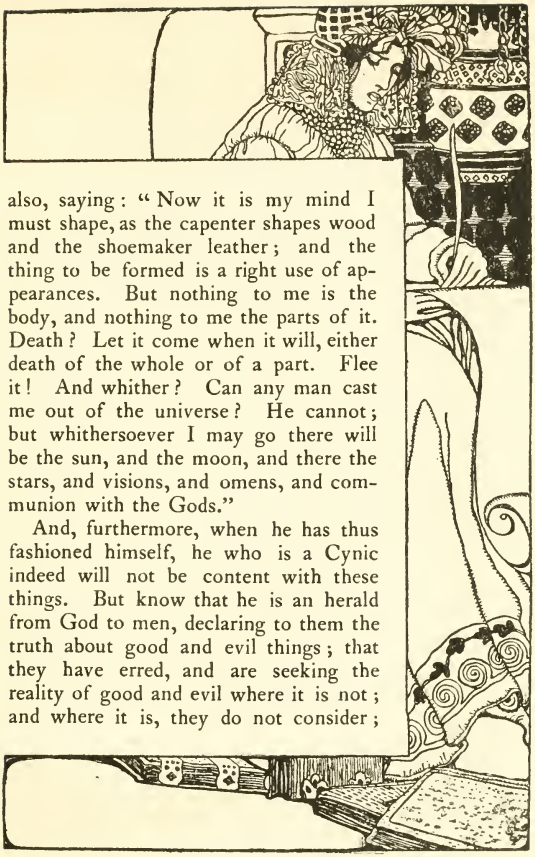
on this wise, far be it from you — go not near it, it is not for you. But if you conceive of it as it is, and hold yourself not unworthy of it, then behold to how great an enterprise you are putting forth your hand.

First, in things that concern yourself, you must appear in nothing like what you now do. You must not accuse God or man; you must utterly give over pursuit, and avoid only those things that are in the power of your will; anger is not meet for you, nor resentment, nor envy, nor pity; nor must a girl appear to you fair, neither must reputation, nor a flat cake. For it must be understood that other men shelter themselves by walls and houses and by darkness when they do such things, and many means of concealment have they. One shuts the door, places someone before the chamber; if anyone should come, say, He is out, he is busy.



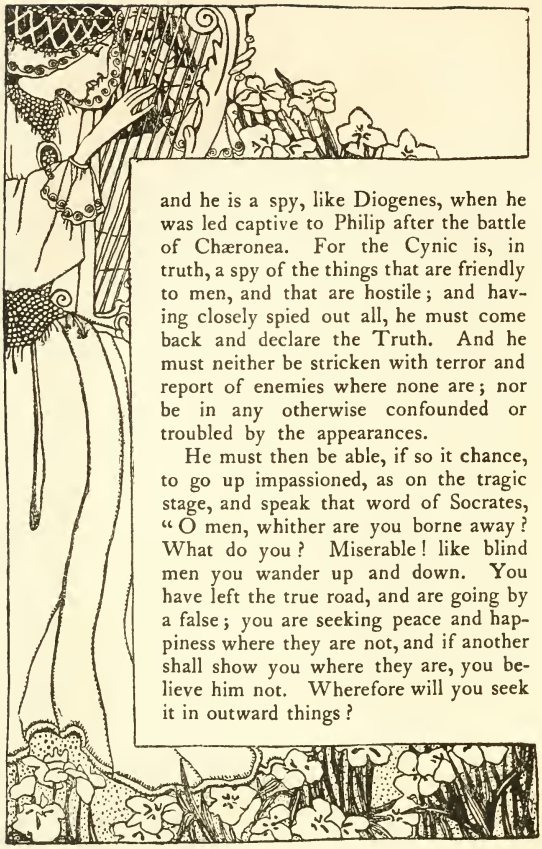
But in place of all these things it behoves the Cynic to shelter himself behind his own piety and reverence; but if he does not, he shall be put to shame, naked under the sky. This is his house, this his door, this the guards of his chamber, this his darkness. For he must not seek to hide aught that he does, else he is gone, the Cynic has perished, the man who lived under the open sky, the freeman. He has begun to fear something from without, he has begun to need concealment; nor can he find it when he would, for where shall he hide himself, and how? And if by chance this tutor, this public teacher, should be found in guilt, what things must he not suffer! And fearing these things, can he yet take heart with his whole soul to guide the rest of mankind? That can he never: it is impossible!

First, then, you must purify your ruling faculty, and this vocation of yours



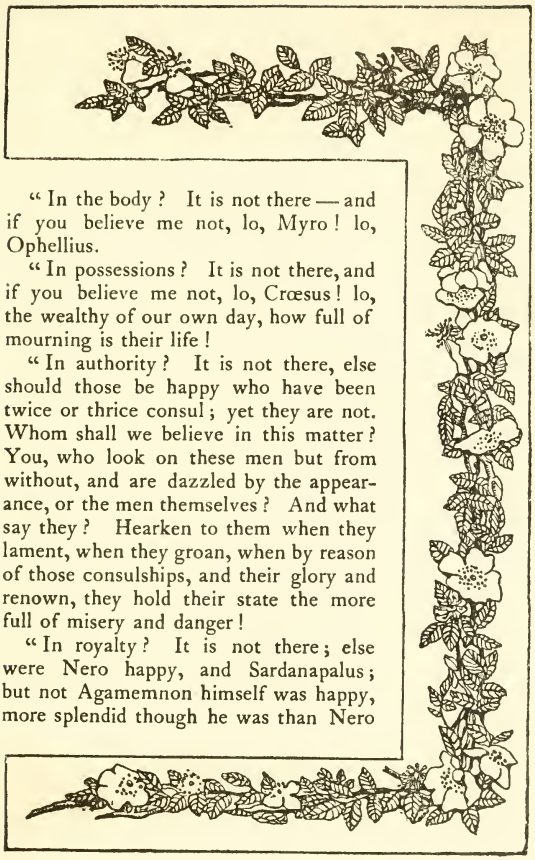
also, saying: "Now it is my mind I must shape, as the capenter shapes wood and the shoemaker leather; and the thing to be formed is a right use of appearances. But nothing to me is the body, and nothing to me the parts of it. Death? Let it come when it will, either death of the whole or of a part. Flee it! And whither? Can any man cast me out of the universe? He cannot; but whithersoever I may go there will be the sun, and the moon, and there the stars, and visions, and omens, and communion with the Gods."

And, furthermore, when he has thus fashioned himself, he who is a Cynic indeed will not be content with these things. But know that he is an herald from God to men, declaring to them the truth about good and evil things; that they have erred, and are seeking the reality of good and evil where it is not; and where it is, they do not consider;



and he is a spy, like Diogenes, when he was led captive to Philip after the battle of Chæronea. For the Cynic is, in truth, a spy of the things that are friendly to men, and that are hostile; and having closely spied out all, he must come back and declare the Truth. And he must neither be stricken with terror and report of enemies where none are; nor be in any otherwise confounded or troubled by the appearances.

He must then be able, if so it chance, to go up impassioned, as on the tragic stage, and speak that word of Socrates, "O men, whither are you borne away? What do you? Miserable! like blind men you wander up and down. You have left the true road, and are going by a false; you are seeking peace and happiness where they are not, and if another shall show you where they are, you believe him not. Wherefore will you seek it in outward things?

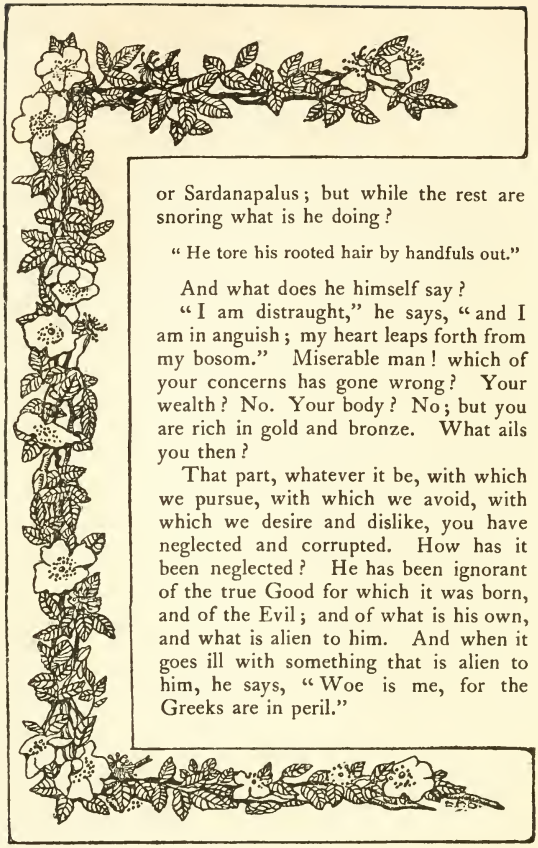


"In the body? It is not there — and if you believe me not, lo, Myro! lo, Ophellius.

"In possessions? It is not there, and if you believe me not, lo, Crœsus! lo, the wealthy of our own day, how full of mourning is their life!

"In authority? It is not there, else should those be happy who have been twice or thrice consul; yet they are not. Whom shall we believe in this matter? You, who look on these men but from without, and are dazzled by the appearance, or the men themselves? And what say they? Hearken to them when they lament, when they groan, when by reason of those consulships, and their glory and renown, they hold their state the more full of misery and danger!

"In royalty? It is not there; else were Nero happy, and Sardanapalus; but not Agamemnon himself was happy, more splendid though he was than Nero



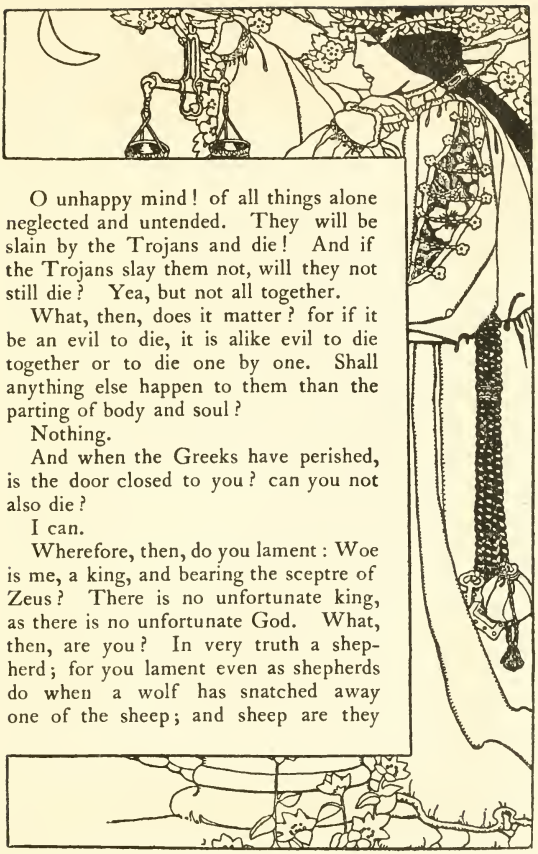
or Sardanapalus; but while the rest are snoring what is he doing?

"He tore his rooted hair by handfuls out."

And what does he himself say?

"I am distraught," he says, "and I am in anguish; my heart leaps forth from my bosom." Miserable man! which of your concerns has gone wrong? Your wealth? No. Your body? No; but you are rich in gold and bronze. What ails you then?

That part, whatever it be, with which we pursue, with which we avoid, with which we desire and dislike, you have neglected and corrupted. How has it been neglected? He has been ignorant of the true Good for which it was born, and of the Evil; and of what is his own, and what is alien to him. And when it goes ill with something that is alien to him, he says, "Woe is me, for the Greeks are in peril."



O unhappy mind! of all things alone neglected and untended. They will be slain by the Trojans and die! And if the Trojans slay them not, will they not still die? Yea, but not all together.

What, then, does it matter? for if it be an evil to die, it is alike evil to die together or to die one by one. Shall anything else happen to them than the parting of body and soul?

Nothing.

And when the Greeks have perished, is the door closed to you? can you not also die?

I can.

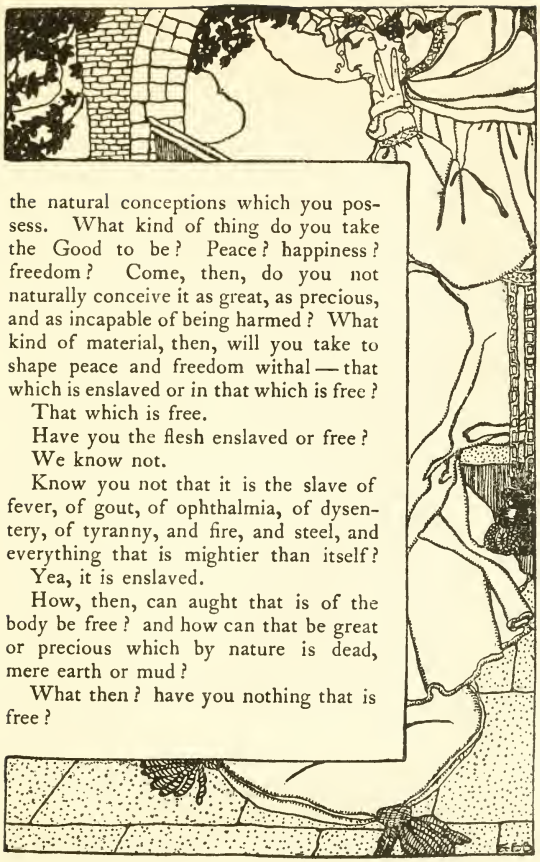
Wherefore, then, do you lament: Woe is me, a king, and bearing the sceptre of Zeus? There is no unfortunate king, as there is no unfortunate God. What, then, are you? In very truth a shepherd; for you lament even as shepherds do when a wolf has snatched away one of the sheep; and sheep are they

whom you rule. And why are you come hither? Was your faculty of pursuit in any peril, or of avoidance, or your desire aversion?

Nay, he says, but my brother's wife was carried away. Was it not a great gain to be rid of an adulterous wife? Shall we be, then, despised of the Trojans? Of the Trojans? Of what manner of men? of wise men or fools? If of wise men, why do you make war with them? if of fools, why do you heed them?

In what, then, is the good, seeing that in these things it is not? Tell us, thou, my lord missionary and spy!

It is there where ye deem it not, and where ye have no desire to seek it. For did you desire, you would have found it in yourselves, nor would you wander to things without, nor pursue things alien, as if they were your own concerns. Turn to your own selves; understand



the natural conceptions which you possess. What kind of thing do you take the Good to be? Peace? happiness? freedom? Come, then, do you not naturally conceive it as great, as precious, and as incapable of being harmed? What kind of material, then, will you take to shape peace and freedom withal — that which is enslaved or in that which is free?

That which is free.

Have you the flesh enslaved or free?

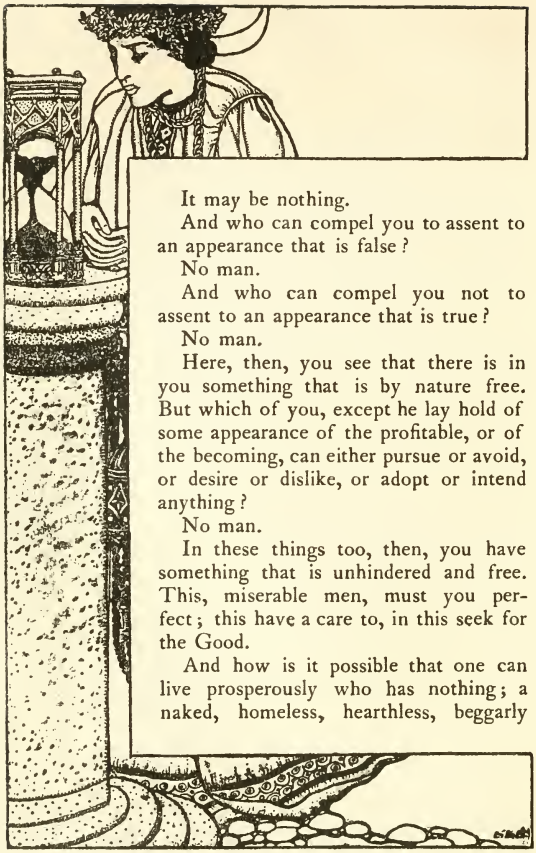
We know not.

Know you not that it is the slave of fever, of gout, of ophthalmia, of dysentery, of tyranny, and fire, and steel, and everything that is mightier than itself?

Yea, it is enslaved.

How, then, can aught that is of the body be free? and how can that be great or precious which by nature is dead, mere earth or mud?

What then? have you nothing that is free?



It may be nothing.

And who can compel you to assent to an appearance that is false?

No man.

And who can compel you not to assent to an appearance that is true?

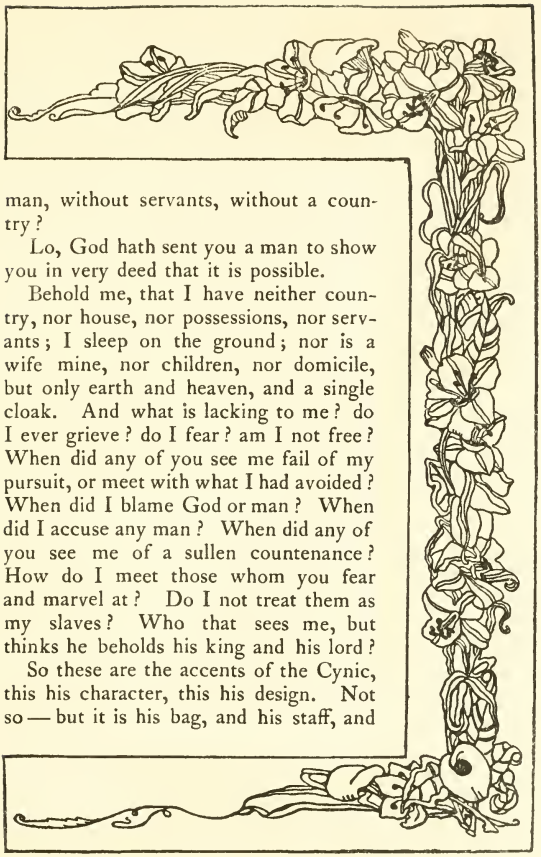
No man.

Here, then, you see that there is in you something that is by nature free. But which of you, except he lay hold of some appearance of the profitable, or of the becoming, can either pursue or avoid, or desire or dislike, or adopt or intend anything?

No man.

In these things too, then, you have something that is unhindered and free. This, miserable men, must you perfect; this have a care to, in this seek for the Good.

And how is it possible that one can live prosperously who has nothing; a naked, homeless, hearthless, beggarly

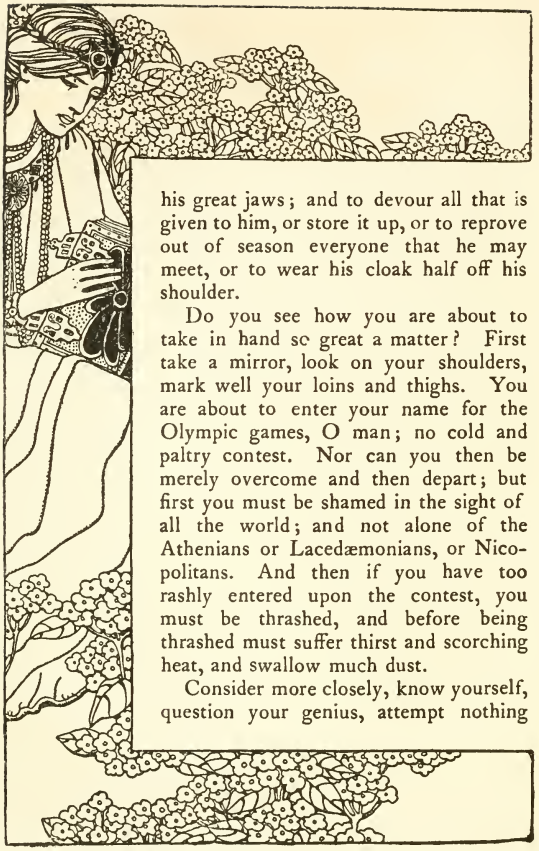


man, without servants, without a country?

Lo, God hath sent you a man to show you in very deed that it is possible.

Behold me, that I have neither country, nor house, nor possessions, nor servants; I sleep on the ground; nor is a wife mine, nor children, nor domicile, but only earth and heaven, and a single cloak. And what is lacking to me? do I ever grieve? do I fear? am I not free? When did any of you see me fail of my pursuit, or meet with what I had avoided? When did I blame God or man? When did I accuse any man? When did any of you see me of a sullen countenance? How do I meet those whom you fear and marvel at? Do I not treat them as my slaves? Who that sees me, but thinks he beholds his king and his lord?

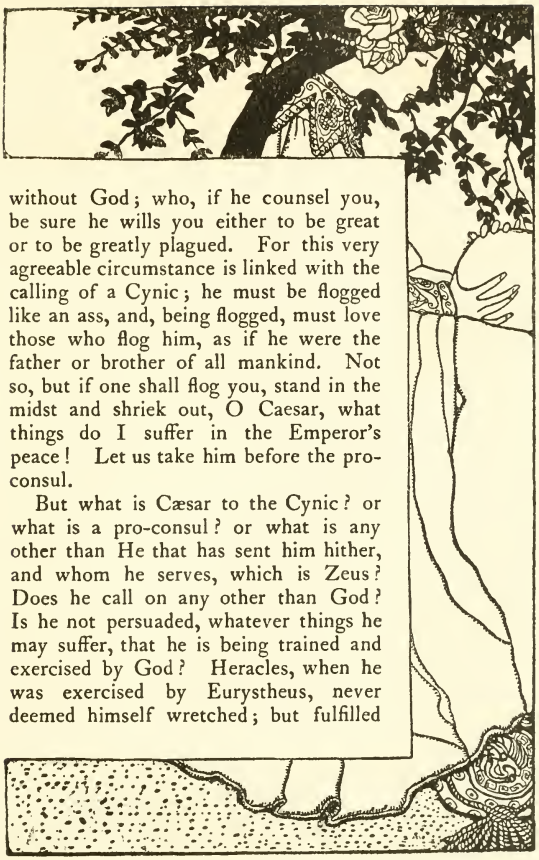
So these are the accents of the Cynic, this his character, this his design. Not so — but it is his bag, and his staff, and



his great jaws; and to devour all that is given to him, or store it up, or to reprove out of season everyone that he may meet, or to wear his cloak half off his shoulder.

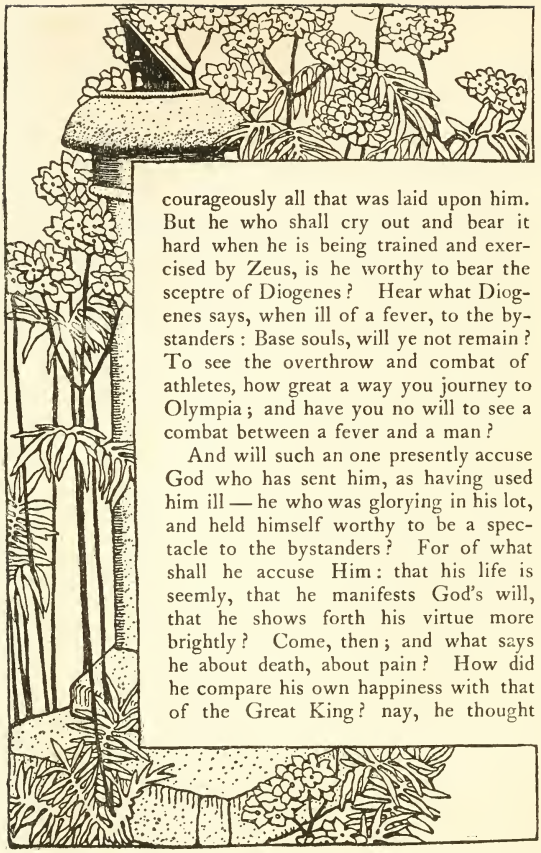
Do you see how you are about to take in hand so great a matter? First take a mirror, look on your shoulders, mark well your loins and thighs. You are about to enter your name for the Olympic games, O man; no cold and paltry contest. Nor can you then be merely overcome and then depart; but first you must be shamed in the sight of all the world; and not alone of the Athenians or Lacedæmonians, or Nicopolitans. And then if you have too rashly entered upon the contest, you must be thrashed, and before being thrashed must suffer thirst and scorching heat, and swallow much dust.

Consider more closely, know yourself, question your genius, attempt nothing



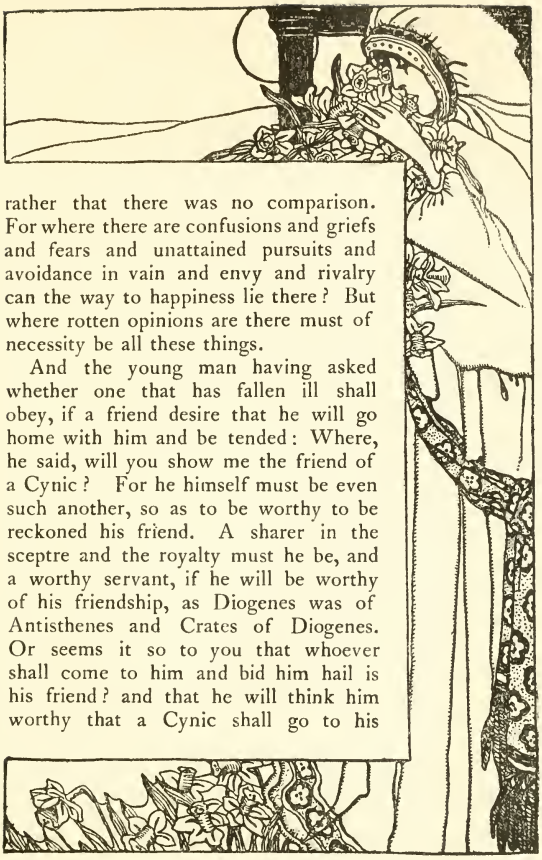
without God; who, if he counsel you, be sure he wills you either to be great or to be greatly plagued. For this very agreeable circumstance is linked with the calling of a Cynic; he must be flogged like an ass, and, being flogged, must love those who flog him, as if he were the father or brother of all mankind. Not so, but if one shall flog you, stand in the midst and shriek out, O Caesar, what things do I suffer in the Emperor's peace! Let us take him before the pro-consul.

But what is Cæsar to the Cynic? or what is a pro-consul? or what is any other than He that has sent him hither, and whom he serves, which is Zeus? Does he call on any other than God? Is he not persuaded, whatever things he may suffer, that he is being trained and exercised by God? Heracles, when he was exercised by Eurystheus, never deemed himself wretched; but fulfilled



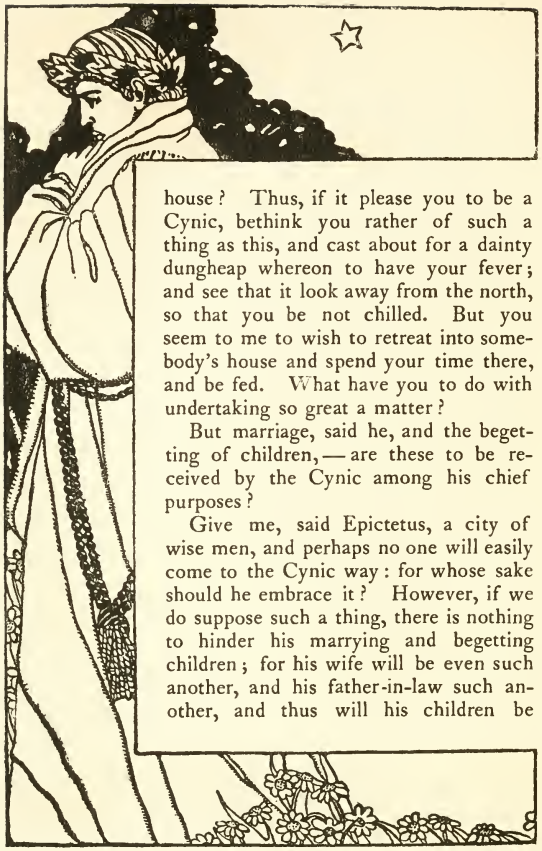
courageously all that was laid upon him. But he who shall cry out and bear it hard when he is being trained and exercised by Zeus, is he worthy to bear the sceptre of Diogenes? Hear what Diogenes says, when ill of a fever, to the bystanders: Base souls, will ye not remain? To see the overthrow and combat of athletes, how great a way you journey to Olympia; and have you no will to see a combat between a fever and a man?

And will such an one presently accuse God who has sent him, as having used him ill — he who was glorying in his lot, and held himself worthy to be a spectacle to the bystanders? For of what shall he accuse Him: that his life is seemly, that he manifests God's will, that he shows forth his virtue more brightly? Come, then; and what says he about death, about pain? How did he compare his own happiness with that of the Great King? nay, he thought



rather that there was no comparison. For where there are confusions and griefs and fears and unattained pursuits and avoidance in vain and envy and rivalry can the way to happiness lie there? But where rotten opinions are there must of necessity be all these things.

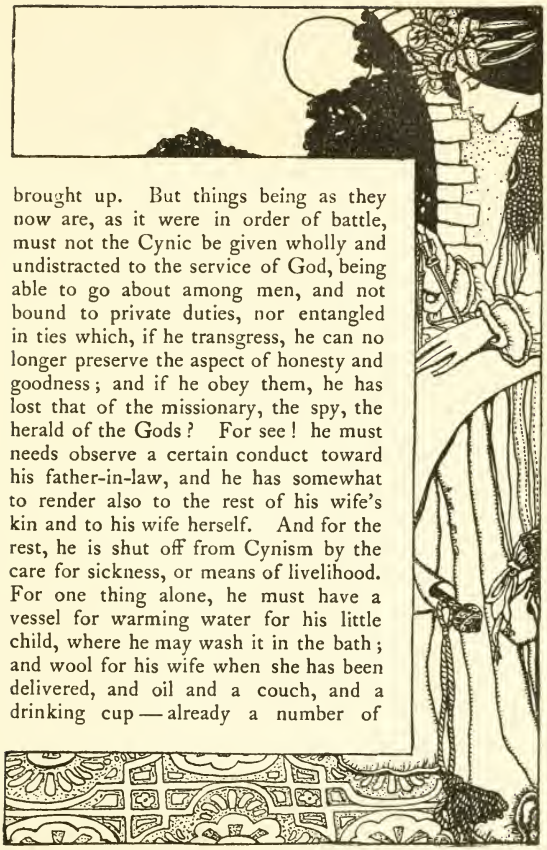
And the young man having asked whether one that has fallen ill shall obey, if a friend desire that he will go home with him and be tended: Where, he said, will you show me the friend of a Cynic? For he himself must be even such another, so as to be worthy to be reckoned his friend. A sharer in the sceptre and the royalty must he be, and a worthy servant, if he will be worthy of his friendship, as Diogenes was of Antisthenes and Crates of Diogenes. Or seems it so to you that whoever shall come to him and bid him hail is his friend? and that he will think him worthy that a Cynic shall go to his



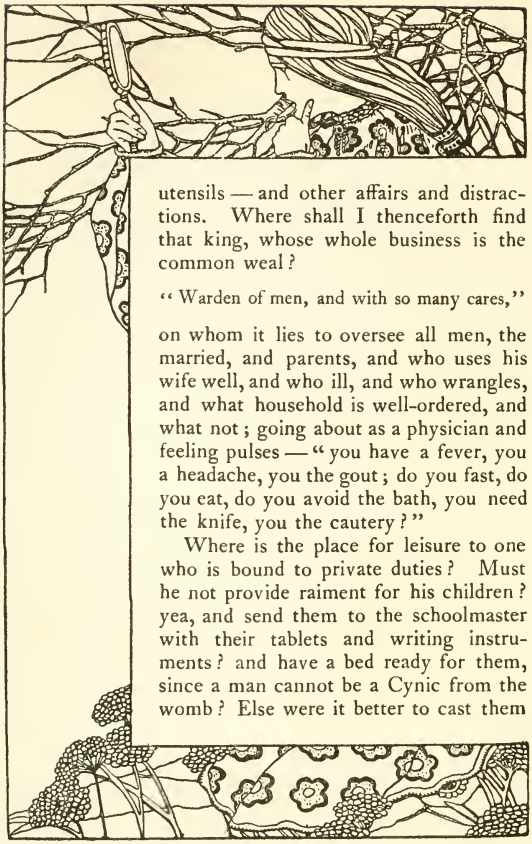
house? Thus, if it please you to be a Cynic, bethink you rather of such a thing as this, and cast about for a dainty dungheap whereon to have your fever; and see that it look away from the north, so that you be not chilled. But you seem to me to wish to retreat into somebody's house and spend your time there, and be fed. What have you to do with undertaking so great a matter?

But marriage, said he, and the begetting of children, — are these to be received by the Cynic among his chief purposes?

Give me, said Epictetus, a city of wise men, and perhaps no one will easily come to the Cynic way: for whose sake should he embrace it? However, if we do suppose such a thing, there is nothing to hinder his marrying and begetting children; for his wife will be even such another, and his father-in-law such another, and thus will his children be



brought up. But things being as they now are, as it were in order of battle, must not the Cynic be given wholly and undistracted to the service of God, being able to go about among men, and not bound to private duties, nor entangled in ties which, if he transgress, he can no longer preserve the aspect of honesty and goodness; and if he obey them, he has lost that of the missionary, the spy, the herald of the Gods? For see! he must needs observe a certain conduct toward his father-in-law, and he has somewhat to render also to the rest of his wife's kin and to his wife herself. And for the rest, he is shut off from Cynism by the care for sickness, or means of livelihood. For one thing alone, he must have a vessel for warming water for his little child, where he may wash it in the bath; and wool for his wife when she has been delivered, and oil and a couch, and a drinking cup — already a number of



utensils — and other affairs and distractions. Where shall I thenceforth find that king, whose whole business is the common weal?

"Warden of men, and with so many cares,"

on whom it lies to oversee all men, the married, and parents, and who uses his wife well, and who ill, and who wrangles, and what household is well-ordered, and what not; going about as a physician and feeling pulses — "you have a fever, you a headache, you the gout; do you fast, do you eat, do you avoid the bath, you need the knife, you the cautery?"

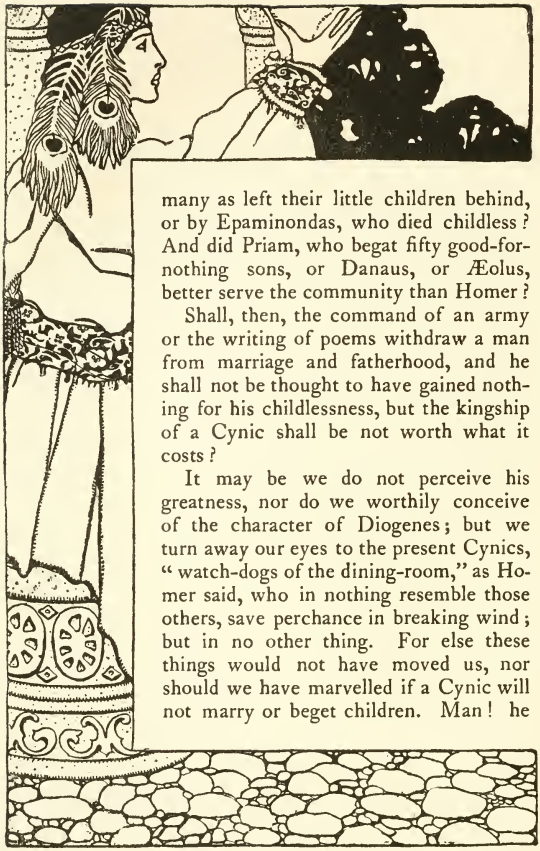
Where is the place for leisure to one who is bound to private duties? Must he not provide raiment for his children? yea, and send them to the schoolmaster with their tablets and writing instruments? and have a bed ready for them, since a man cannot be a Cynic from the womb? Else were it better to cast them

away at once than kill them in this way. See, now, to what we have brought our Cynic — how we have taken away his kingship from him!

True, but Crates married.

You speak of a circumstance that arose from love, and adduce a wife who was another Crates. But our inquiry is concerning common marriages, and how men may be undistracted; and thus inquiring, we do not find it, in this condition of the world, a purpose of chief concern for a Cynic.

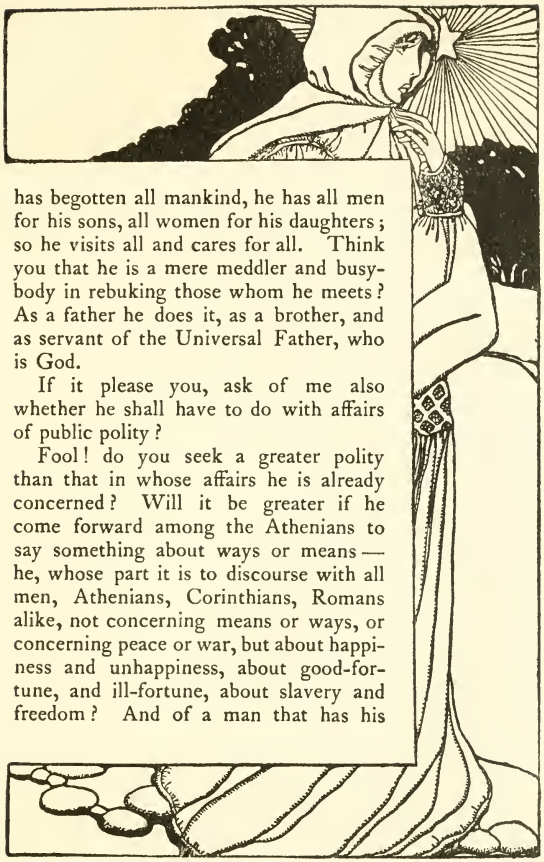
How, then, said he, shall he still be preserving the community? God help you! Whether do they best serve mankind who fill their own place by bringing into the world two or three screaming children, or those who, as far they may, oversee all men, what they do, how they live, wherefore they concern themselves, and what duties they neglect? And were the Thebans more benefited by as



many as left their little children behind, or by Epaminondas, who died childless? And did Priam, who begat fifty good-for-nothing sons, or Danaus, or Æolus, better serve the community than Homer?

Shall, then, the command of an army or the writing of poems withdraw a man from marriage and fatherhood, and he shall not be thought to have gained nothing for his childlessness, but the kingship of a Cynic shall be not worth what it costs?

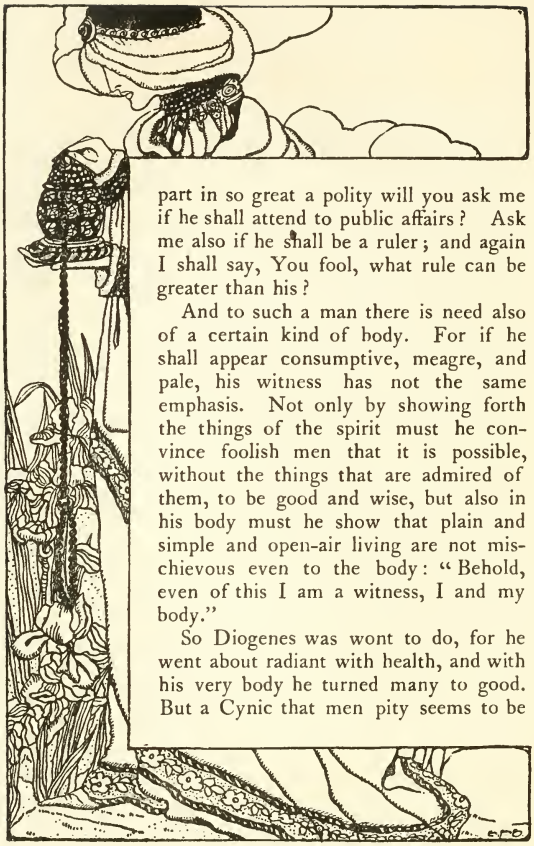
It may be we do not perceive his greatness, nor do we worthily conceive of the character of Diogenes; but we turn away our eyes to the present Cynics, "watch-dogs of the dining-room," as Homer said, who in nothing resemble those others, save perchance in breaking wind; but in no other thing. For else these things would not have moved us, nor should we have marvelled if a Cynic will not marry or beget children. Man! he



has begotten all mankind, he has all men for his sons, all women for his daughters; so he visits all and cares for all. Think you that he is a mere meddler and busybody in rebuking those whom he meets? As a father he does it, as a brother, and as servant of the Universal Father, who is God.

If it please you, ask of me also whether he shall have to do with affairs of public polity?

Fool! do you seek a greater polity than that in whose affairs he is already concerned? Will it be greater if he come forward among the Athenians to say something about ways or means — he, whose part it is to discourse with all men, Athenians, Corinthians, Romans alike, not concerning means or ways, or concerning peace or war, but about happiness and unhappiness, about good-fortune, and ill-fortune, about slavery and freedom? And of a man that has his



part in so great a polity will you ask me if he shall attend to public affairs? Ask me also if he shall be a ruler; and again I shall say, You fool, what rule can be greater than his?

And to such a man there is need also of a certain kind of body. For if he shall appear consumptive, meagre, and pale, his witness has not the same emphasis. Not only by showing forth the things of the spirit must he convince foolish men that it is possible, without the things that are admired of them, to be good and wise, but also in his body must he show that plain and simple and open-air living are not mischievous even to the body: "Behold, even of this I am a witness, I and my body."

So Diogenes was wont to do, for he went about radiant with health, and with his very body he turned many to good. But a Cynic that men pity seems to be

a beggar — all men turn away from him, all stumble at him. For he must not appear squalid; so that neither in this respect shall he scare men away; but his very austerity should be cleanly and pleasing.

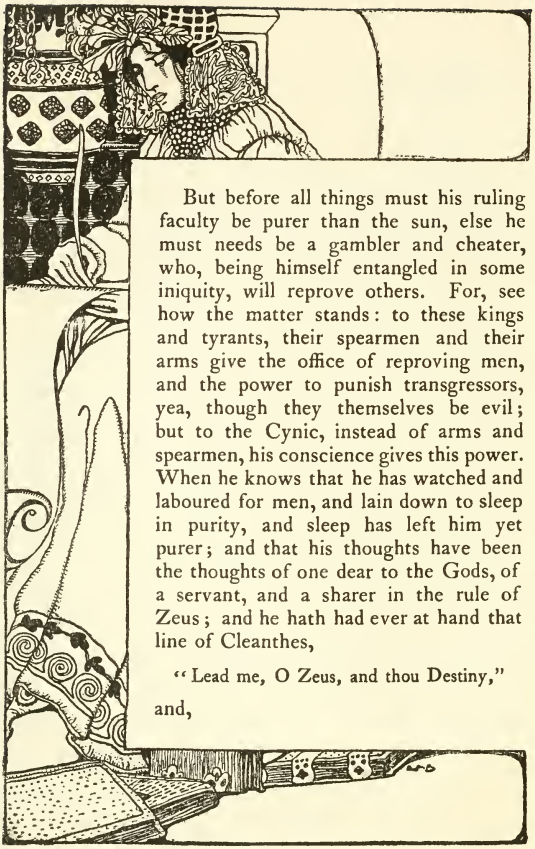
Much grace of body, then, must belong to the Cynic, and also quickness of mind, else he is a mere clot of slime and nothing else; for he must be ready and apt to meet all that may befall him.

Thus when one said to Diogenes: You are that Diogenes who thinks there are no Gods, he replied, And how may that be, seeing I hold you hateful to the Gods? And again, when Alexander stood beside him, as he was lying asleep, and said:

"Not all night must a man of counsel sleep,"

he answered, ere he was yet awake:

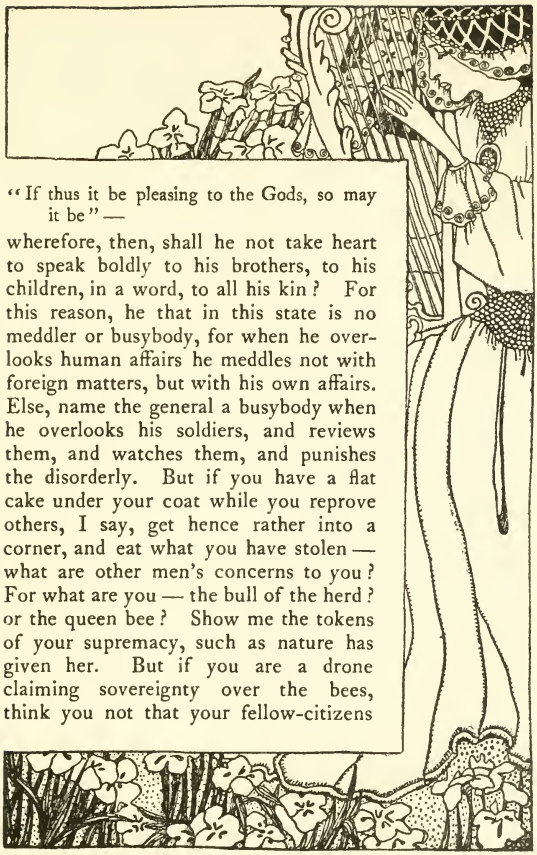
"Warden of men, and with so many cares."



But before all things must his ruling faculty be purer than the sun, else he must needs be a gambler and cheater, who, being himself entangled in some iniquity, will reprove others. For, see how the matter stands: to these kings and tyrants, their spearmen and their arms give the office of reproving men, and the power to punish transgressors, yea, though they themselves be evil; but to the Cynic, instead of arms and spearmen, his conscience gives this power. When he knows that he has watched and laboured for men, and lain down to sleep in purity, and sleep has left him yet purer; and that his thoughts have been the thoughts of one dear to the Gods, of a servant, and a sharer in the rule of Zeus; and he hath had ever at hand that line of Cleanthes,

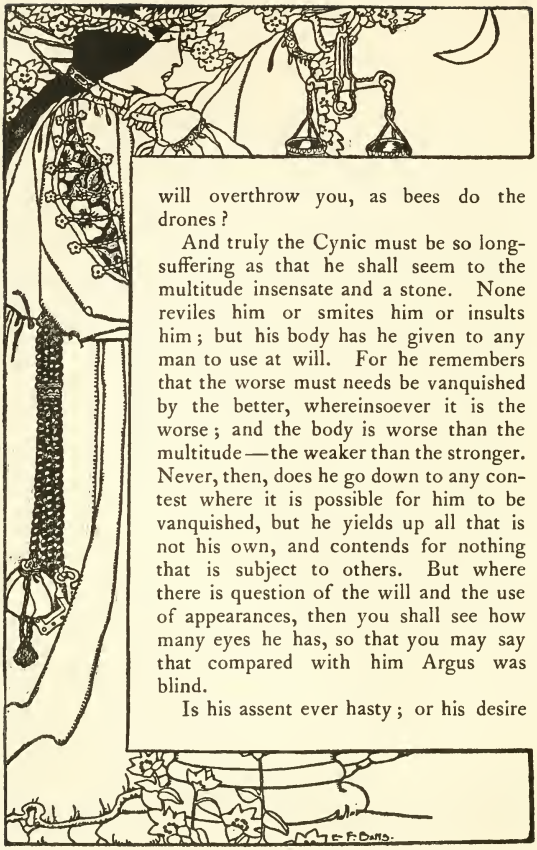
"Lead me, O Zeus, and thou Destiny,"

and,



"If thus it be pleasing to the Gods, so may it be" —

wherefore, then, shall he not take heart to speak boldly to his brothers, to his children, in a word, to all his kin? For this reason, he that in this state is no meddler or busybody, for when he overlooks human affairs he meddles not with foreign matters, but with his own affairs. Else, name the general a busybody when he overlooks his soldiers, and reviews them, and watches them, and punishes the disorderly. But if you have a flat cake under your coat while you reprove others, I say, get hence rather into a corner, and eat what you have stolen — what are other men's concerns to you? For what are you — the bull of the herd? or the queen bee? Show me the tokens of your supremacy, such as nature has given her. But if you are a drone claiming sovereignty over the bees, think you not that your fellow-citizens



will overthrow you, as bees do the drones?

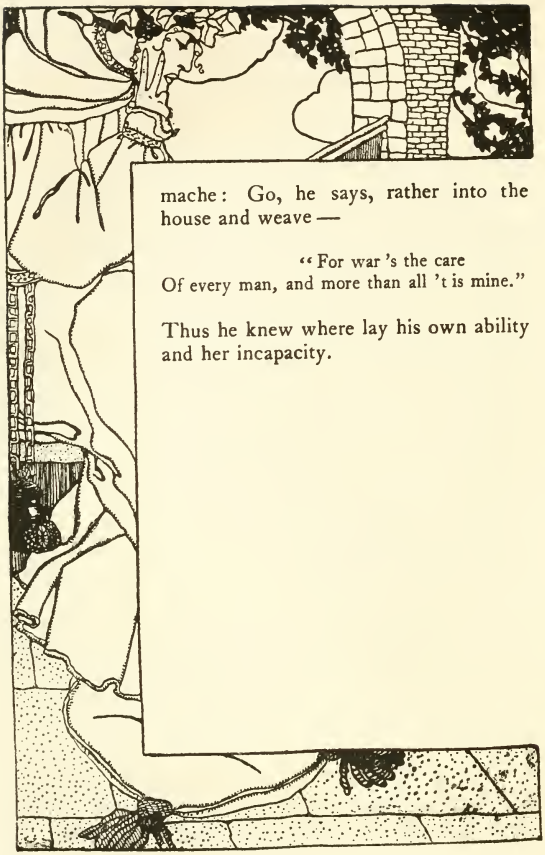
And truly the Cynic must be so long-suffering as that he shall seem to the multitude insensate and a stone. None reviles him or smites him or insults him; but his body has he given to any man to use at will. For he remembers that the worse must needs be vanquished by the better, whereinsoever it is the worse; and the body is worse than the multitude—the weaker than the stronger. Never, then, does he go down to any contest where it is possible for him to be vanquished, but he yields up all that is not his own, and contends for nothing that is subject to others. But where there is question of the will and the use of appearances, then you shall see how many eyes he has, so that you may say that compared with him Argus was blind.

Is his assent ever hasty; or his desire

idle; or his pursuit in vain; or his avoidance unsuccessful; or his aim unfulfilled? does he ever blame, or cringe, or envy? This is his great study and his design; but as regards all other things, he lies on his back and snores, for all is peace. There is no thief of his will, or tyrant; but of his body? yea; and of his chattels? yea, and also of his authority and his honours.

What, then, are these things to him? So when one may seek to make him afraid on account of them, — Go hence, he says to him, and find out little children; to these are masks dreadful, but I know they are made of clay, and that inside them there is nothing.

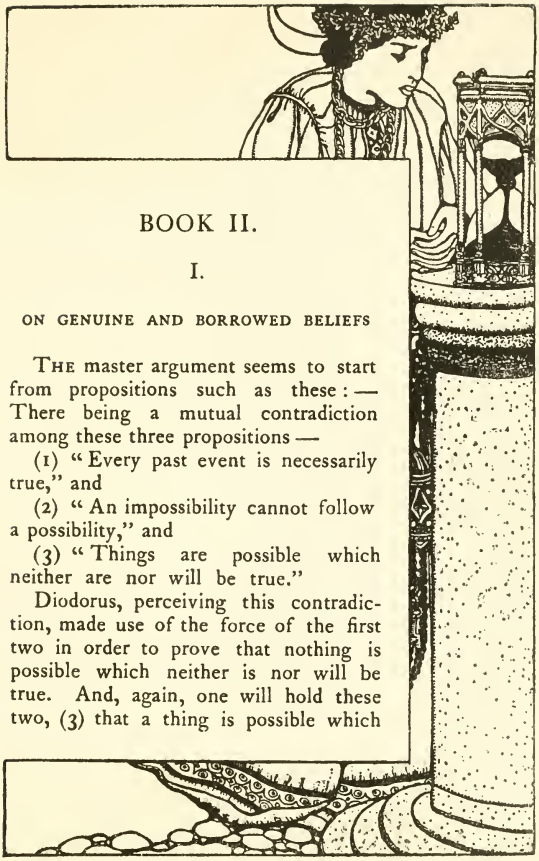
On such a matter are you now meditating. Therefore, if it please you, in God's name delay it yet awhile, and see first what ability you have for it. For mark what Hector speaks to Andro-



mache: Go, he says, rather into the house and weave —

"For war 's the care
Of every man, and more than all 't is mine."

Thus he knew where lay his own ability and her incapacity.



BOOK II.

I.

ON GENUINE AND BORROWED BELIEFS

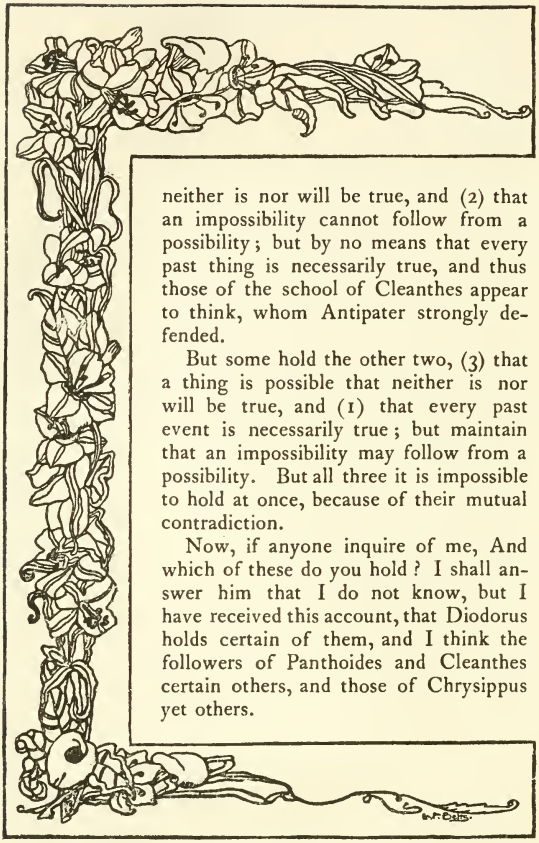
THE master argument seems to start from propositions such as these: — There being a mutual contradiction among these three propositions —

(1) "Every past event is necessarily true," and

(2) "An impossibility cannot follow a possibility," and

(3) "Things are possible which neither are nor will be true."

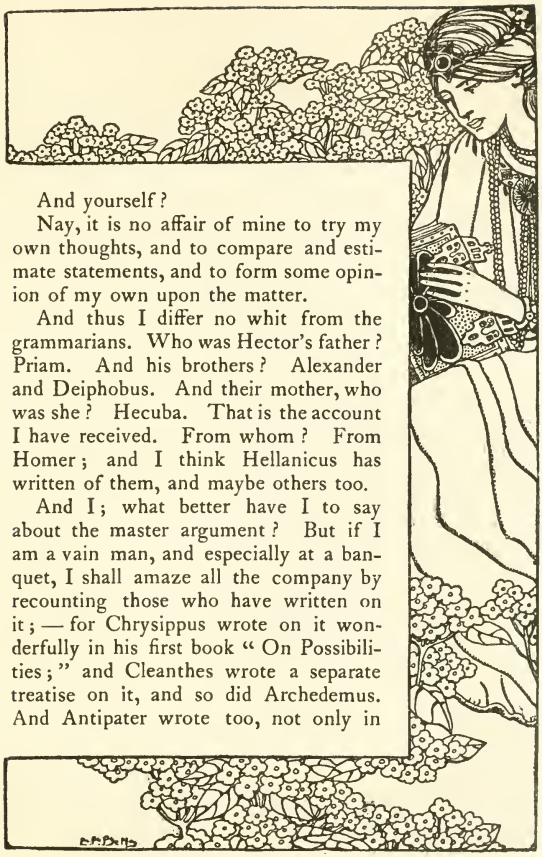
Diodorus, perceiving this contradiction, made use of the force of the first two in order to prove that nothing is possible which neither is nor will be true. And, again, one will hold these two, (3) that a thing is possible which



neither is nor will be true, and (2) that an impossibility cannot follow from a possibility; but by no means that every past thing is necessarily true, and thus those of the school of Cleanthes appear to think, whom Antipater strongly defended.

But some hold the other two, (3) that a thing is possible that neither is nor will be true, and (1) that every past event is necessarily true; but maintain that an impossibility may follow from a possibility. But all three it is impossible to hold at once, because of their mutual contradiction.

Now, if anyone inquire of me, And which of these do you hold? I shall answer him that I do not know, but I have received this account, that Diodorus holds certain of them, and I think the followers of Panthoides and Cleanthes certain others, and those of Chrysippus yet others.

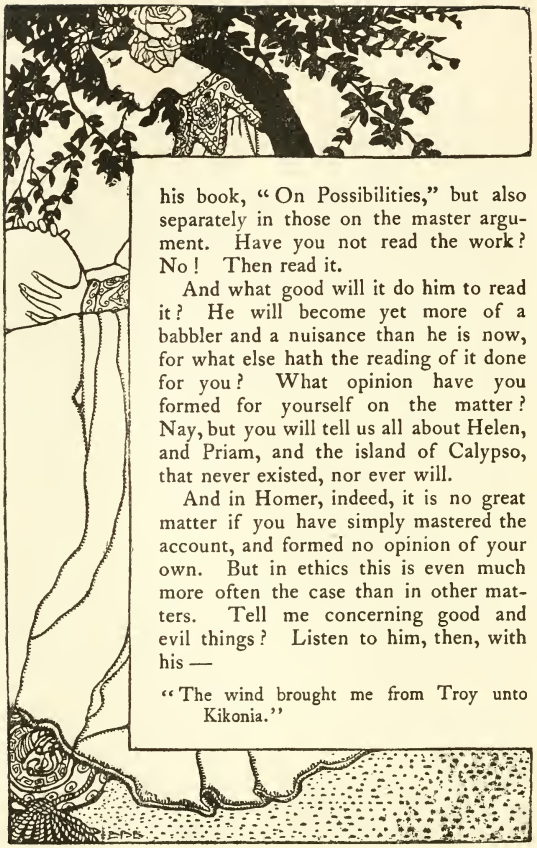


And yourself?

Nay, it is no affair of mine to try my own thoughts, and to compare and estimate statements, and to form some opinion of my own upon the matter.

And thus I differ no whit from the grammarians. Who was Hector's father? Priam. And his brothers? Alexander and Deiphobus. And their mother, who was she? Hecuba. That is the account I have received. From whom? From Homer; and I think Hellanicus has written of them, and maybe others too.

And I; what better have I to say about the master argument? But if I am a vain man, and especially at a banquet, I shall amaze all the company by recounting those who have written on it; — for Chrysippus wrote on it wonderfully in his first book "On Possibilities;" and Cleanthes wrote a separate treatise on it, and so did Archedemus. And Antipater wrote too, not only in

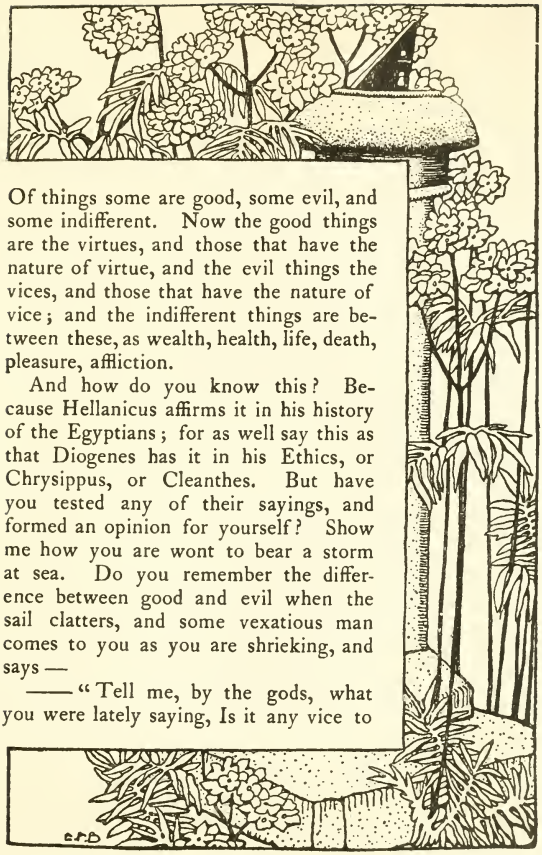


his book, "On Possibilities," but also separately in those on the master argument. Have you not read the work? No! Then read it.

And what good will it do him to read it? He will become yet more of a babbler and a nuisance than he is now, for what else hath the reading of it done for you? What opinion have you formed for yourself on the matter? Nay, but you will tell us all about Helen, and Priam, and the island of Calypso, that never existed, nor ever will.

And in Homer, indeed, it is no great matter if you have simply mastered the account, and formed no opinion of your own. But in ethics this is even much more often the case than in other matters. Tell me concerning good and evil things? Listen to him, then, with his —

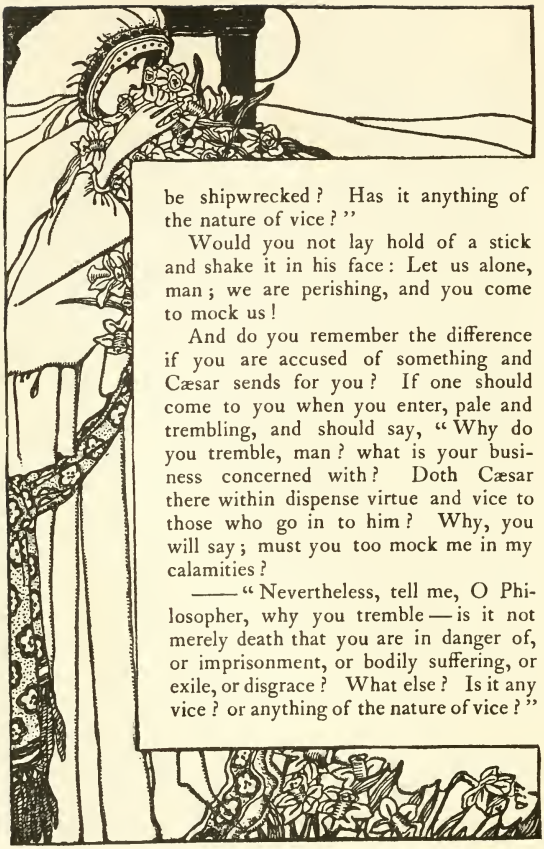
"The wind brought me from Troy unto Kikonia."



Of things some are good, some evil, and some indifferent. Now the good things are the virtues, and those that have the nature of virtue, and the evil things the vices, and those that have the nature of vice; and the indifferent things are between these, as wealth, health, life, death, pleasure, affliction.

And how do you know this? Because Hellanicus affirms it in his history of the Egyptians; for as well say this as that Diogenes has it in his Ethics, or Chrysippus, or Cleanthes. But have you tested any of their sayings, and formed an opinion for yourself? Show me how you are wont to bear a storm at sea. Do you remember the difference between good and evil when the sail clatters, and some vexatious man comes to you as you are shrieking, and says —

—— "Tell me, by the gods, what you were lately saying, Is it any vice to

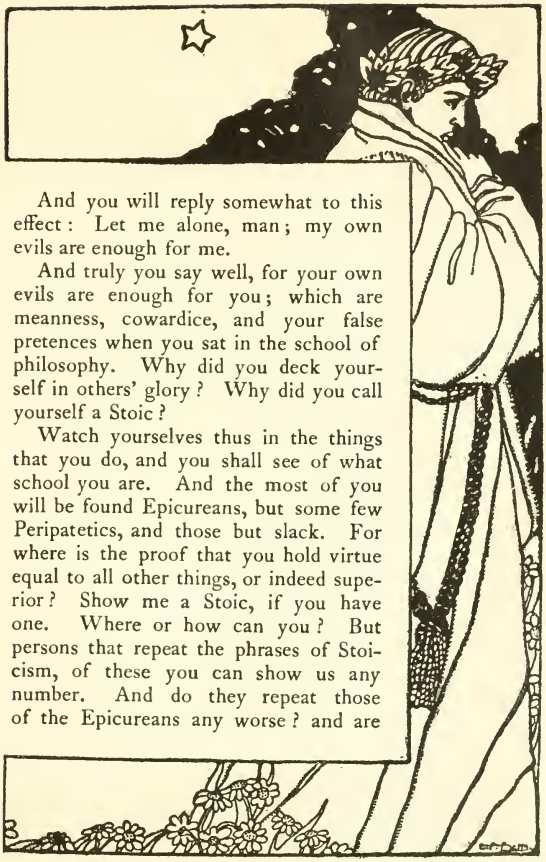


be shipwrecked? Has it anything of the nature of vice?"

Would you not lay hold of a stick and shake it in his face: Let us alone, man; we are perishing, and you come to mock us!

And do you remember the difference if you are accused of something and Cæsar sends for you? If one should come to you when you enter, pale and trembling, and should say, "Why do you tremble, man? what is your business concerned with? Doth Cæsar there within dispense virtue and vice to those who go in to him? Why, you will say; must you too mock me in my calamities?

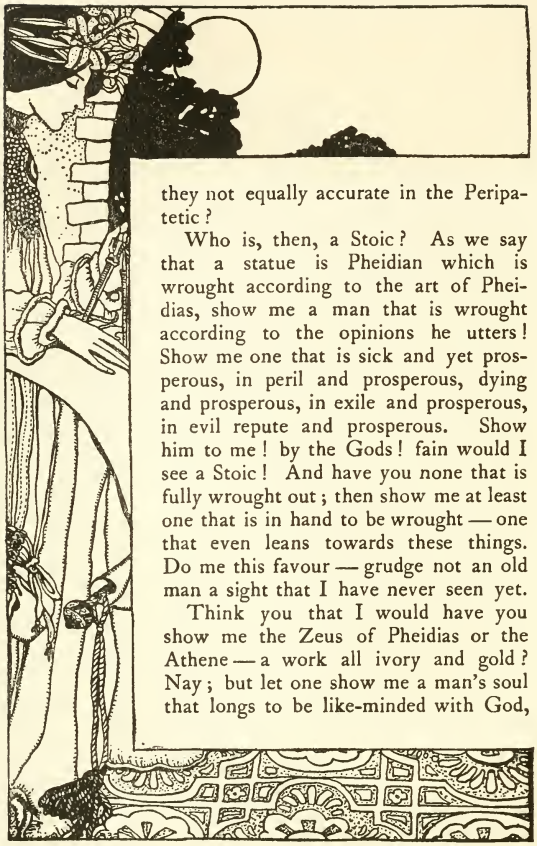
——"Nevertheless, tell me, O Philosopher, why you tremble — is it not merely death that you are in danger of, or imprisonment, or bodily suffering, or exile, or disgrace? What else? Is it any vice? or anything of the nature of vice?"



And you will reply somewhat to this effect: Let me alone, man; my own evils are enough for me.

And truly you say well, for your own evils are enough for you; which are meanness, cowardice, and your false pretences when you sat in the school of philosophy. Why did you deck yourself in others' glory? Why did you call yourself a Stoic?

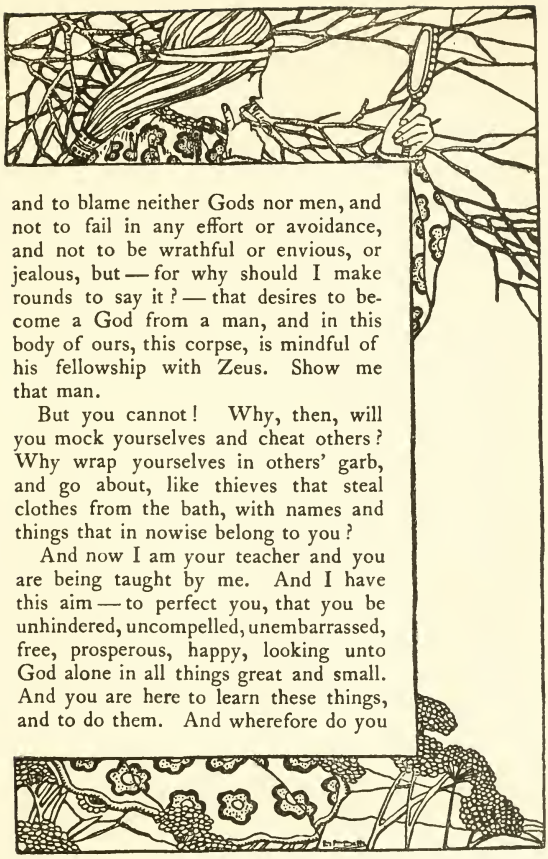
Watch yourselves thus in the things that you do, and you shall see of what school you are. And the most of you will be found Epicureans, but some few Peripatetics, and those but slack. For where is the proof that you hold virtue equal to all other things, or indeed superior? Show me a Stoic, if you have one. Where or how can you? But persons that repeat the phrases of Stoicism, of these you can show us any number. And do they repeat those of the Epicureans any worse? and are



they not equally accurate in the Peripatetic?

Who is, then, a Stoic? As we say that a statue is Pheidian which is wrought according to the art of Pheidias, show me a man that is wrought according to the opinions he utters! Show me one that is sick and yet prosperous, in peril and prosperous, dying and prosperous, in exile and prosperous, in evil repute and prosperous. Show him to me! by the Gods! fain would I see a Stoic! And have you none that is fully wrought out; then show me at least one that is in hand to be wrought — one that even leans towards these things. Do me this favour — grudge not an old man a sight that I have never seen yet.

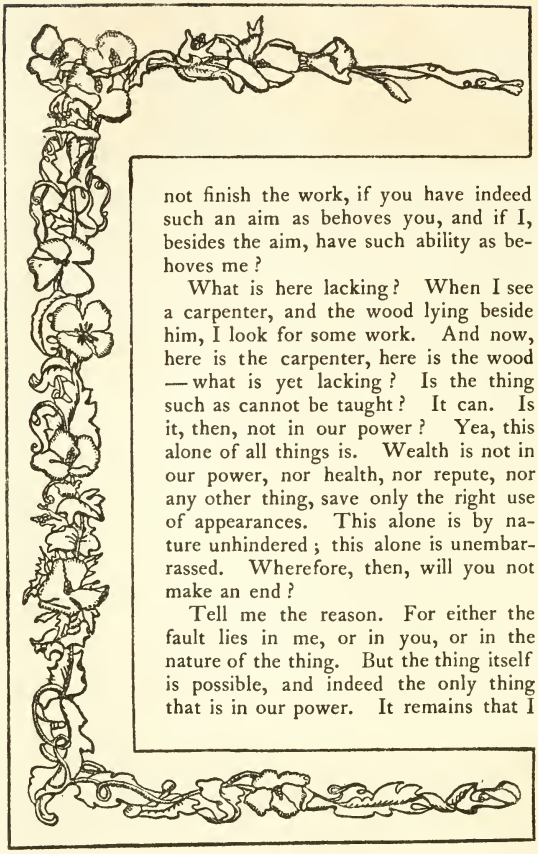
Think you that I would have you show me the Zeus of Pheidias or the Athene — a work all ivory and gold? Nay; but let one show me a man's soul that longs to be like-minded with God,



and to blame neither Gods nor men, and not to fail in any effort or avoidance, and not to be wrathful or envious, or jealous, but — for why should I make rounds to say it? — that desires to become a God from a man, and in this body of ours, this corpse, is mindful of his fellowship with Zeus. Show me that man.

But you cannot! Why, then, will you mock yourselves and cheat others? Why wrap yourselves in others' garb, and go about, like thieves that steal clothes from the bath, with names and things that in nowise belong to you?

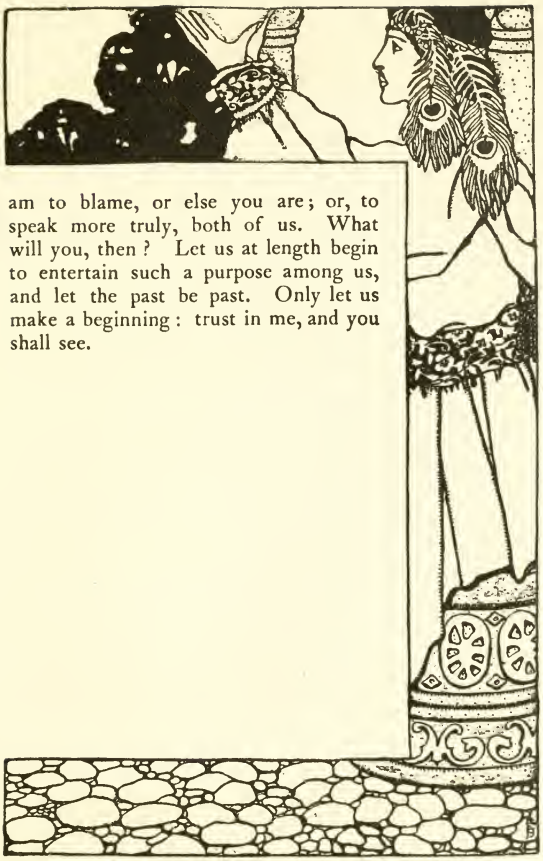
And now I am your teacher and you are being taught by me. And I have this aim — to perfect you, that you be unhindered, uncompelled, unembarrassed, free, prosperous, happy, looking unto God alone in all things great and small. And you are here to learn these things, and to do them. And wherefore do you



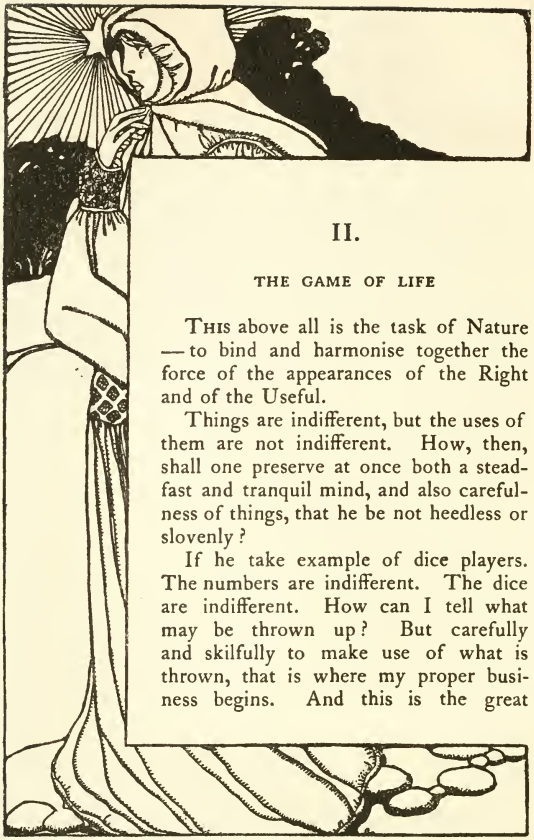
not finish the work, if you have indeed such an aim as behoves you, and if I, besides the aim, have such ability as behoves me?

What is here lacking? When I see a carpenter, and the wood lying beside him, I look for some work. And now, here is the carpenter, here is the wood — what is yet lacking? Is the thing such as cannot be taught? It can. Is it, then, not in our power? Yea, this alone of all things is. Wealth is not in our power, nor health, nor repute, nor any other thing, save only the right use of appearances. This alone is by nature unhindered; this alone is unembarrassed. Wherefore, then, will you not make an end?

Tell me the reason. For either the fault lies in me, or in you, or in the nature of the thing. But the thing itself is possible, and indeed the only thing that is in our power. It remains that I



am to blame, or else you are; or, to speak more truly, both of us. What will you, then? Let us at length begin to entertain such a purpose among us, and let the past be past. Only let us make a beginning: trust in me, and you shall see.



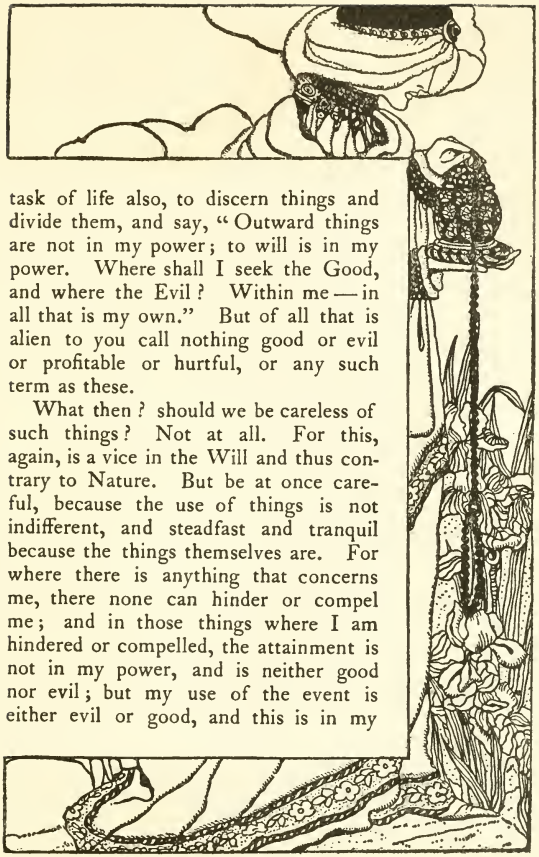
II.

THE GAME OF LIFE

This above all is the task of Nature — to bind and harmonise together the force of the appearances of the Right and of the Useful.

Things are indifferent, but the uses of them are not indifferent. How, then, shall one preserve at once both a steadfast and tranquil mind, and also carefulness of things, that he be not heedless or slovenly?

If he take example of dice players. The numbers are indifferent. The dice are indifferent. How can I tell what may be thrown up? But carefully and skilfully to make use of what is thrown, that is where my proper business begins. And this is the great



task of life also, to discern things and divide them, and say, "Outward things are not in my power; to will is in my power. Where shall I seek the Good, and where the Evil? Within me — in all that is my own." But of all that is alien to you call nothing good or evil or profitable or hurtful, or any such term as these.

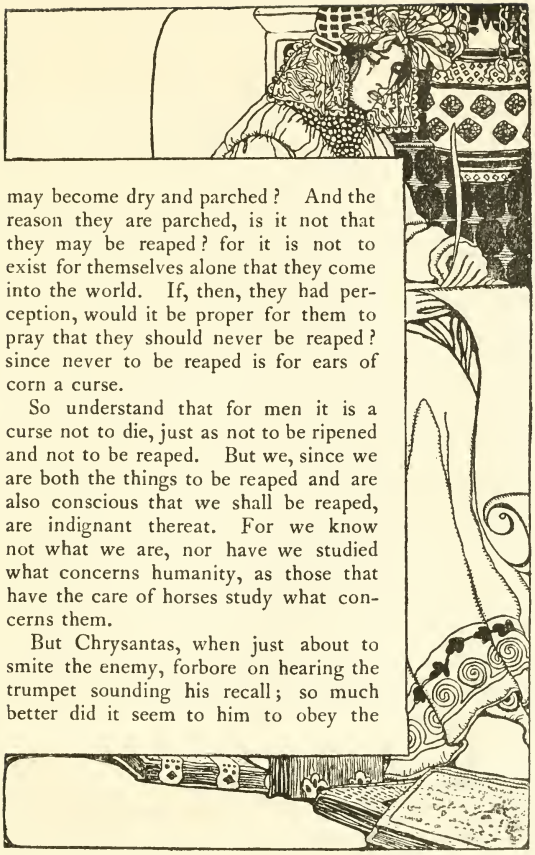
What then? should we be careless of such things? Not at all. For this, again, is a vice in the Will and thus contrary to Nature. But be at once careful, because the use of things is not indifferent, and steadfast and tranquil because the things themselves are. For where there is anything that concerns me, there none can hinder or compel me; and in those things where I am hindered or compelled, the attainment is not in my power, and is neither good nor evil; but my use of the event is either evil or good, and this is in my

power. And hard it is, indeed, to mingle and reconcile together the carefulness of one whom outward things affect, with the steadfastness of him who regards them not. But impossible it is not; and if it is, it is impossible to be happy.

Give me one man that cares how he shall do anything — that thinks not of the gaining of the thing, but thinks of his own energy.

Chrysippus, therefore, said well — "As long as future things are hidden from me, I hold always by whatever state is the most favourable for gaining the things that are according to Nature; for God himself gave it to me to make such choice. But if I knew that it were now ordained for me to be sick, I would even move to it of myself. For the foot, too, if it had intelligence, would move of itself to be mired."

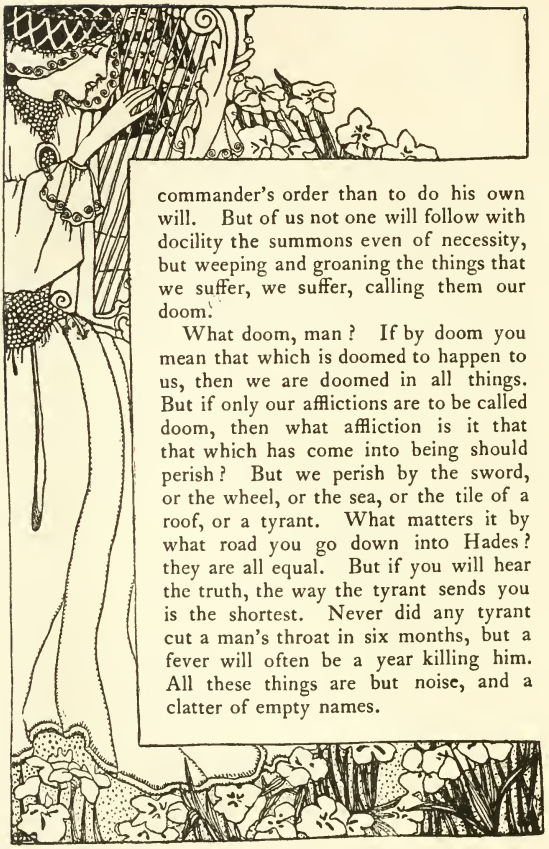
For to what end, think you, are ears of corn produced? Is it not that they



may become dry and parched? And the reason they are parched, is it not that they may be reaped? for it is not to exist for themselves alone that they come into the world. If, then, they had perception, would it be proper for them to pray that they should never be reaped? since never to be reaped is for ears of corn a curse.

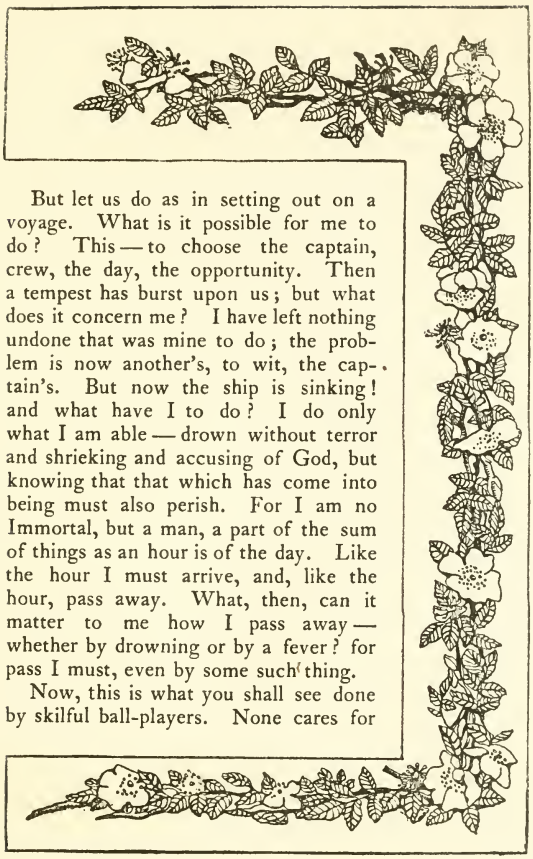
So understand that for men it is a curse not to die, just as not to be ripened and not to be reaped. But we, since we are both the things to be reaped and are also conscious that we shall be reaped, are indignant thereat. For we know not what we are, nor have we studied what concerns humanity, as those that have the care of horses study what concerns them.

But Chrysantas, when just about to smite the enemy, forbore on hearing the trumpet sounding his recall; so much better did it seem to him to obey the



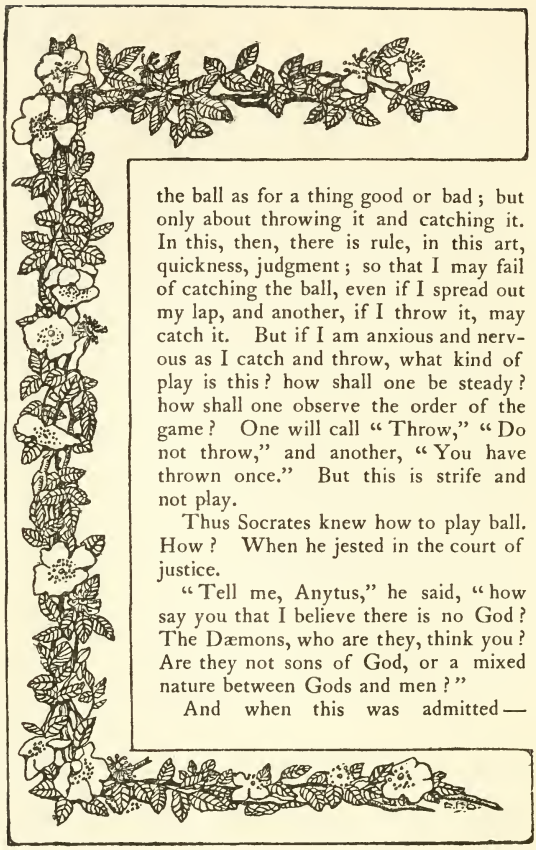
commander's order than to do his own will. But of us not one will follow with docility the summons even of necessity, but weeping and groaning the things that we suffer, we suffer, calling them our doom.

What doom, man? If by doom you mean that which is doomed to happen to us, then we are doomed in all things. But if only our afflictions are to be called doom, then what affliction is it that that which has come into being should perish? But we perish by the sword, or the wheel, or the sea, or the tile of a roof, or a tyrant. What matters it by what road you go down into Hades? they are all equal. But if you will hear the truth, the way the tyrant sends you is the shortest. Never did any tyrant cut a man's throat in six months, but a fever will often be a year killing him. All these things are but noise, and a clatter of empty names.



But let us do as in setting out on a voyage. What is it possible for me to do? This — to choose the captain, crew, the day, the opportunity. Then a tempest has burst upon us; but what does it concern me? I have left nothing undone that was mine to do; the problem is now another's, to wit, the captain's. But now the ship is sinking! and what have I to do? I do only what I am able — drown without terror and shrieking and accusing of God, but knowing that that which has come into being must also perish. For I am no Immortal, but a man, a part of the sum of things as an hour is of the day. Like the hour I must arrive, and, like the hour, pass away. What, then, can it matter to me how I pass away — whether by drowning or by a fever? for pass I must, even by some such thing.

Now, this is what you shall see done by skilful ball-players. None cares for

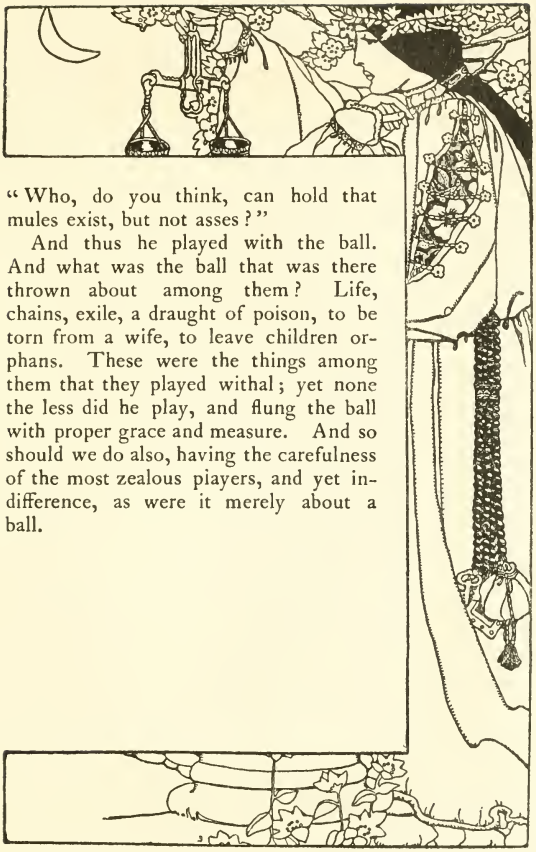


the ball as for a thing good or bad; but only about throwing it and catching it. In this, then, there is rule, in this art, quickness, judgment; so that I may fail of catching the ball, even if I spread out my lap, and another, if I throw it, may catch it. But if I am anxious and nervous as I catch and throw, what kind of play is this? how shall one be steady? how shall one observe the order of the game? One will call "Throw," "Do not throw," and another, "You have thrown once." But this is strife and not play.

Thus Socrates knew how to play ball. How? When he jested in the court of justice.

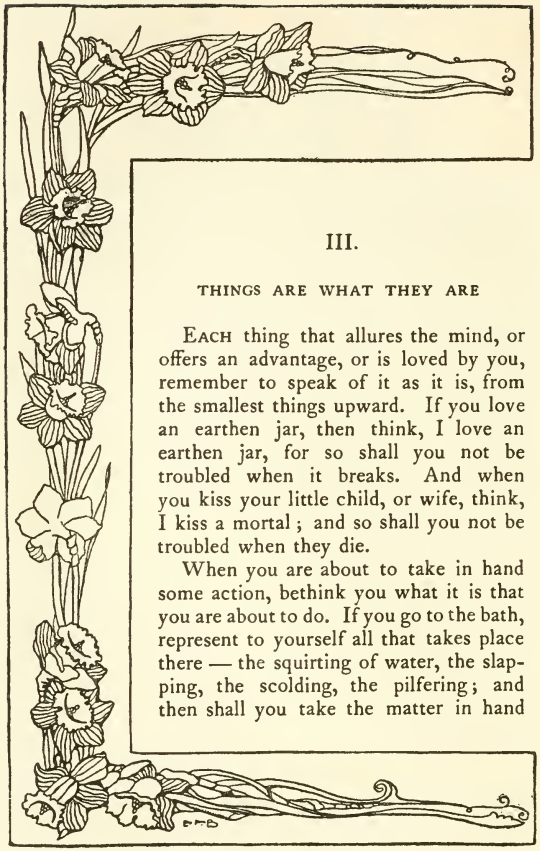
"Tell me, Anytus," he said, "how say you that I believe there is no God? The Dæmons, who are they, think you? Are they not sons of God, or a mixed nature between Gods and men?"

And when this was admitted —



"Who, do you think, can hold that mules exist, but not asses?"

And thus he played with the ball. And what was the ball that was there thrown about among them? Life, chains, exile, a draught of poison, to be torn from a wife, to leave children orphans. These were the things among them that they played withal; yet none the less did he play, and flung the ball with proper grace and measure. And so should we do also, having the carefulness of the most zealous players, and yet indifference, as were it merely about a ball.

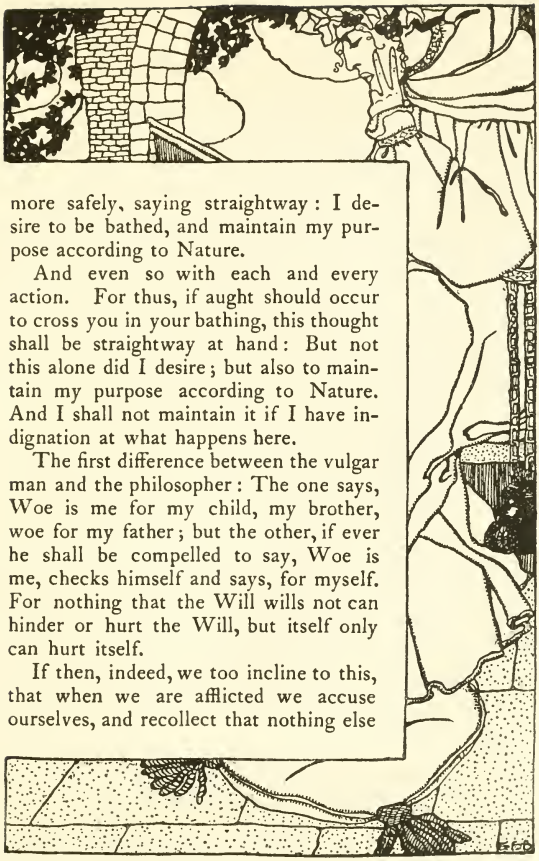


III.

THINGS ARE WHAT THEY ARE

EACH thing that allures the mind, or offers an advantage, or is loved by you, remember to speak of it as it is, from the smallest things upward. If you love an earthen jar, then think, I love an earthen jar, for so shall you not be troubled when it breaks. And when you kiss your little child, or wife, think, I kiss a mortal; and so shall you not be troubled when they die.

When you are about to take in hand some action, bethink you what it is that you are about to do. If you go to the bath, represent to yourself all that takes place there — the squirting of water, the slapping, the scolding, the pilfering; and then shall you take the matter in hand

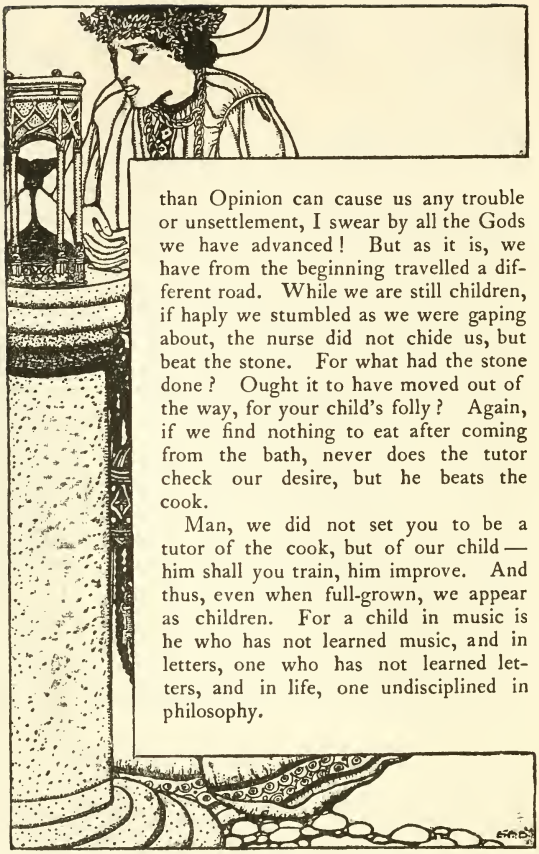


more safely, saying straightway: I desire to be bathed, and maintain my purpose according to Nature.

And even so with each and every action. For thus, if aught should occur to cross you in your bathing, this thought shall be straightway at hand: But not this alone did I desire; but also to maintain my purpose according to Nature. And I shall not maintain it if I have indignation at what happens here.

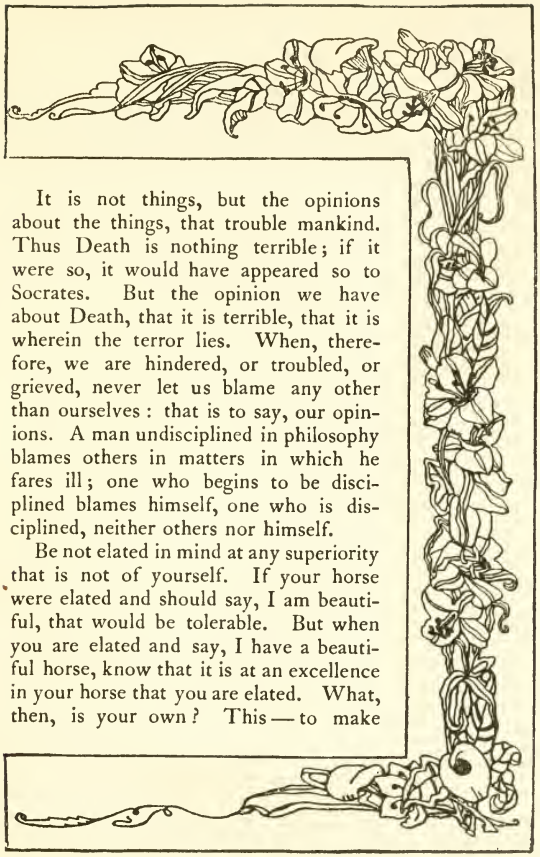
The first difference between the vulgar man and the philosopher: The one says, Woe is me for my child, my brother, woe for my father; but the other, if ever he shall be compelled to say, Woe is me, checks himself and says, for myself. For nothing that the Will wills not can hinder or hurt the Will, but itself only can hurt itself.

If then, indeed, we too incline to this, that when we are afflicted we accuse ourselves, and recollect that nothing else



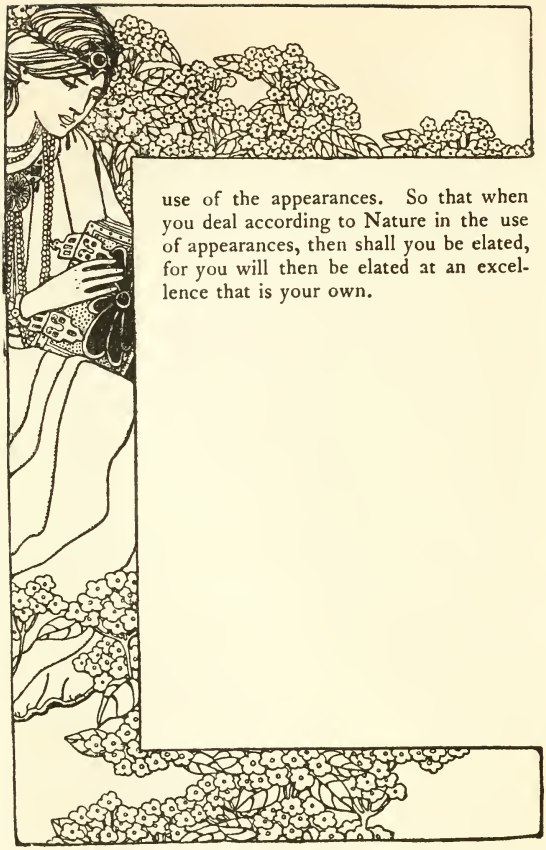
than Opinion can cause us any trouble or unsettlement, I swear by all the Gods we have advanced! But as it is, we have from the beginning travelled a different road. While we are still children, if haply we stumbled as we were gaping about, the nurse did not chide us, but beat the stone. For what had the stone done? Ought it to have moved out of the way, for your child's folly? Again, if we find nothing to eat after coming from the bath, never does the tutor check our desire, but he beats the cook.

Man, we did not set you to be a tutor of the cook, but of our child — him shall you train, him improve. And thus, even when full-grown, we appear as children. For a child in music is he who has not learned music, and in letters, one who has not learned letters, and in life, one undisciplined in philosophy.

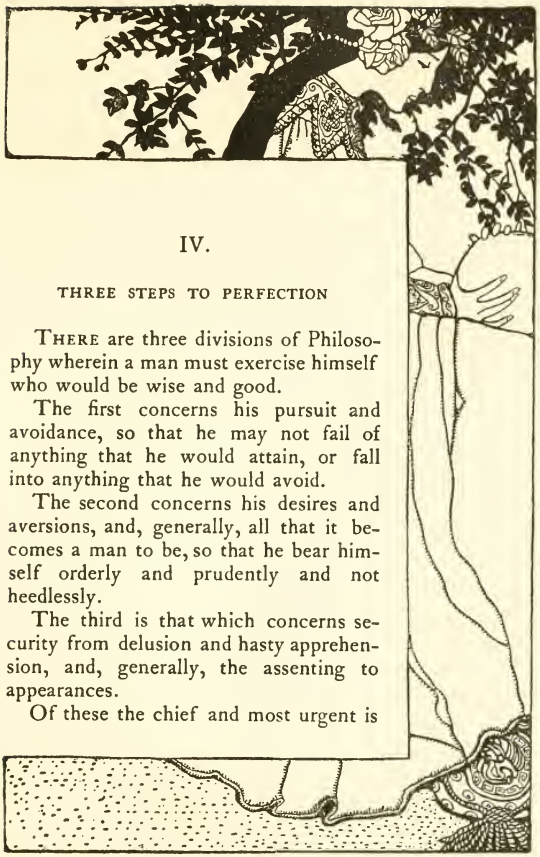


It is not things, but the opinions about the things, that trouble mankind. Thus Death is nothing terrible; if it were so, it would have appeared so to Socrates. But the opinion we have about Death, that it is terrible, that it is wherein the terror lies. When, therefore, we are hindered, or troubled, or grieved, never let us blame any other than ourselves: that is to say, our opinions. A man undisciplined in philosophy blames others in matters in which he fares ill; one who begins to be disciplined blames himself, one who is disciplined, neither others nor himself.

Be not elated in mind at any superiority that is not of yourself. If your horse were elated and should say, I am beautiful, that would be tolerable. But when you are elated and say, I have a beautiful horse, know that it is at an excellence in your horse that you are elated. What, then, is your own? This — to make



use of the appearances. So that when you deal according to Nature in the use of appearances, then shall you be elated, for you will then be elated at an excellence that is your own.



IV.

THREE STEPS TO PERFECTION

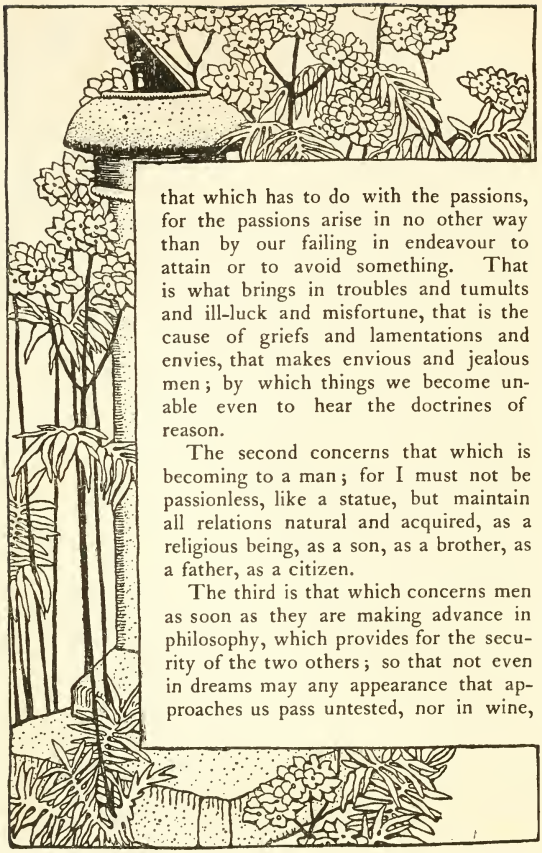
THERE are three divisions of Philosophy wherein a man must exercise himself who would be wise and good.

The first concerns his pursuit and avoidance, so that he may not fail of anything that he would attain, or fall into anything that he would avoid.

The second concerns his desires and aversions, and, generally, all that it becomes a man to be, so that he bear himself orderly and prudently and not heedlessly.

The third is that which concerns security from delusion and hasty apprehension, and, generally, the assenting to appearances.

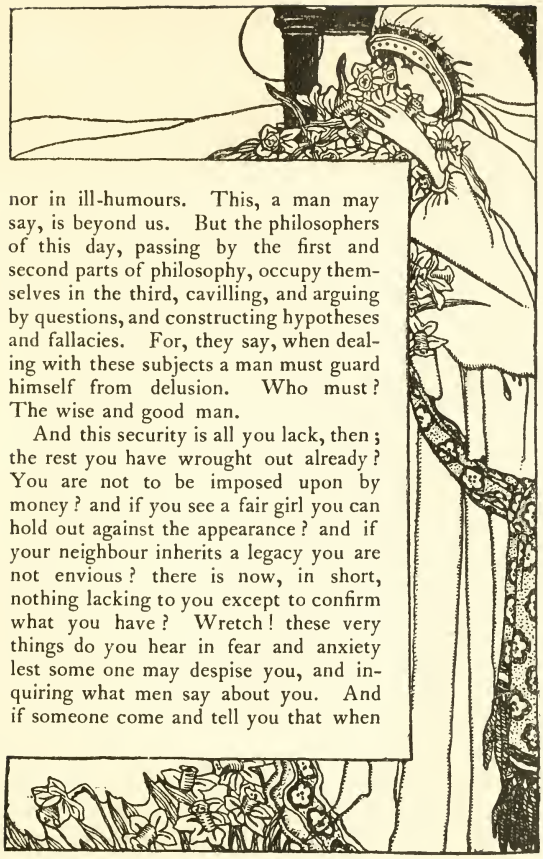
Of these the chief and most urgent is



that which has to do with the passions, for the passions arise in no other way than by our failing in endeavour to attain or to avoid something. That is what brings in troubles and tumults and ill-luck and misfortune, that is the cause of griefs and lamentations and envies, that makes envious and jealous men; by which things we become unable even to hear the doctrines of reason.

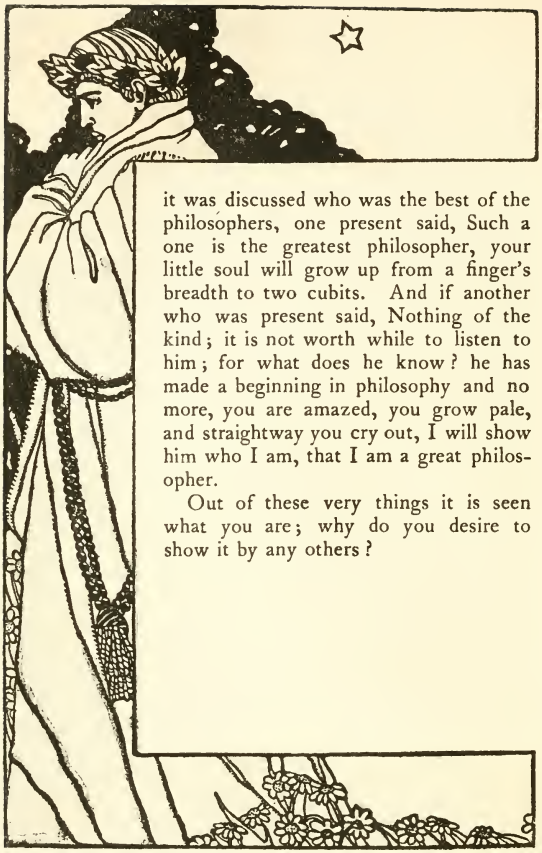
The second concerns that which is becoming to a man; for I must not be passionless, like a statue, but maintain all relations natural and acquired, as a religious being, as a son, as a brother, as a father, as a citizen.

The third is that which concerns men as soon as they are making advance in philosophy, which provides for the security of the two others; so that not even in dreams may any appearance that approaches us pass untested, nor in wine,



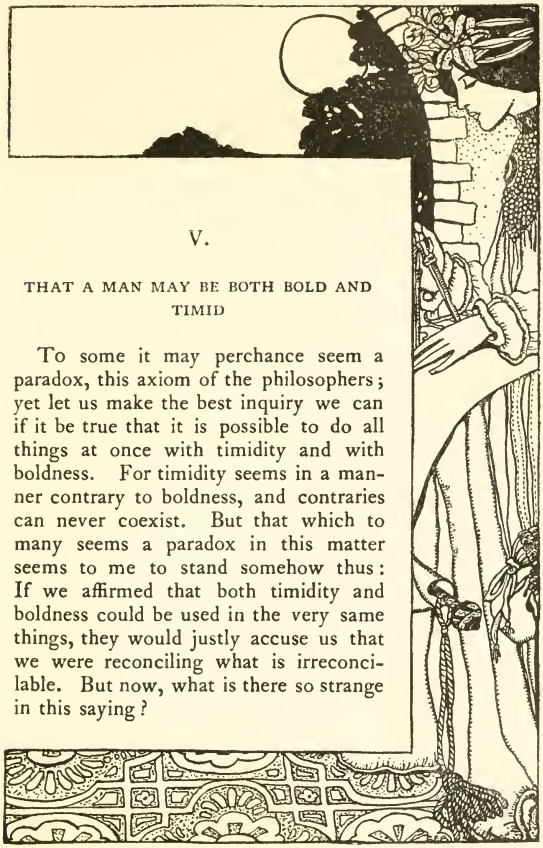
nor in ill-humours. This, a man may say, is beyond us. But the philosophers of this day, passing by the first and second parts of philosophy, occupy themselves in the third, cavilling, and arguing by questions, and constructing hypotheses and fallacies. For, they say, when dealing with these subjects a man must guard himself from delusion. Who must? The wise and good man.

And this security is all you lack, then; the rest you have wrought out already? You are not to be imposed upon by money? and if you see a fair girl you can hold out against the appearance? and if your neighbour inherits a legacy you are not envious? there is now, in short, nothing lacking to you except to confirm what you have? Wretch! these very things do you hear in fear and anxiety lest some one may despise you, and inquiring what men say about you. And if someone come and tell you that when



it was discussed who was the best of the philosophers, one present said, Such a one is the greatest philosopher, your little soul will grow up from a finger's breadth to two cubits. And if another who was present said, Nothing of the kind; it is not worth while to listen to him; for what does he know? he has made a beginning in philosophy and no more, you are amazed, you grow pale, and straightway you cry out, I will show him who I am, that I am a great philosopher.

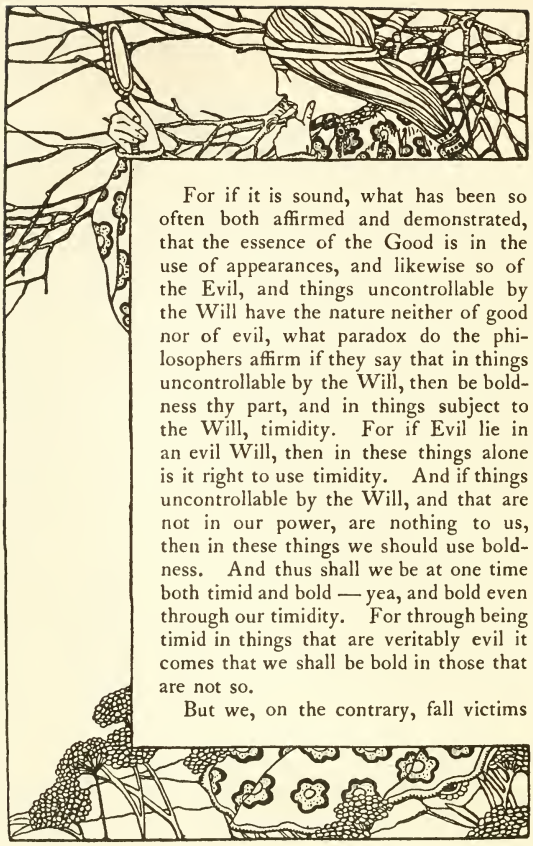
Out of these very things it is seen what you are; why do you desire to show it by any others?



V.

THAT A MAN MAY BE BOTH BOLD AND TIMID

To some it may perchance seem a paradox, this axiom of the philosophers; yet let us make the best inquiry we can if it be true that it is possible to do all things at once with timidity and with boldness. For timidity seems in a manner contrary to boldness, and contraries can never coexist. But that which to many seems a paradox in this matter seems to me to stand somehow thus: If we affirmed that both timidity and boldness could be used in the very same things, they would justly accuse us that we were reconciling what is irreconcilable. But now, what is there so strange in this saying?

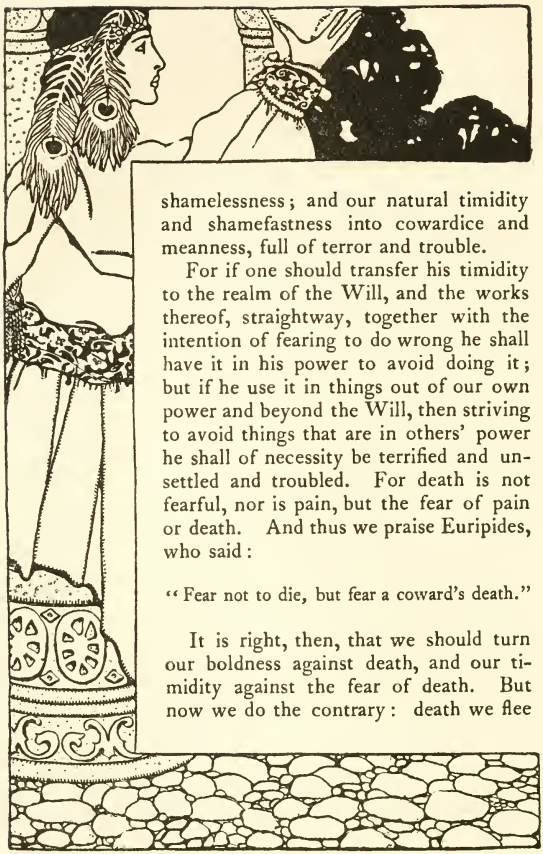


For if it is sound, what has been so often both affirmed and demonstrated, that the essence of the Good is in the use of appearances, and likewise so of the Evil, and things uncontrollable by the Will have the nature neither of good nor of evil, what paradox do the philosophers affirm if they say that in things uncontrollable by the Will, then be boldness thy part, and in things subject to the Will, timidity. For if Evil lie in an evil Will, then in these things alone is it right to use timidity. And if things uncontrollable by the Will, and that are not in our power, are nothing to us, then in these things we should use boldness. And thus shall we be at one time both timid and bold — yea, and bold even through our timidity. For through being timid in things that are veritably evil it comes that we shall be bold in those that are not so.

But we, on the contrary, fall victims

as deer do. When these are terrified and fly from the beaters, whither do they turn and to what do they retreat as a refuge? To the nets: and thus they perish, confusing things to fear and things to be bold about. And thus do we also.

Where do we employ fear? In things beyond our Will. And wherein do we act boldly, as were there nothing to dread? In things subject to the Will. To be beguiled, then, or to be rash, or to do some shameless act, or with base greed to pursue some object — these things concern us no whit if we may only hit the mark in things beyond the Will. But where death is, or exile, or suffering, or evil repute, there we run away, there we are scared. Therefore, as it were to be looked for in those who are astray in the things of greatest moment, we work out our natural boldness into swaggering, abandonment, rashness,

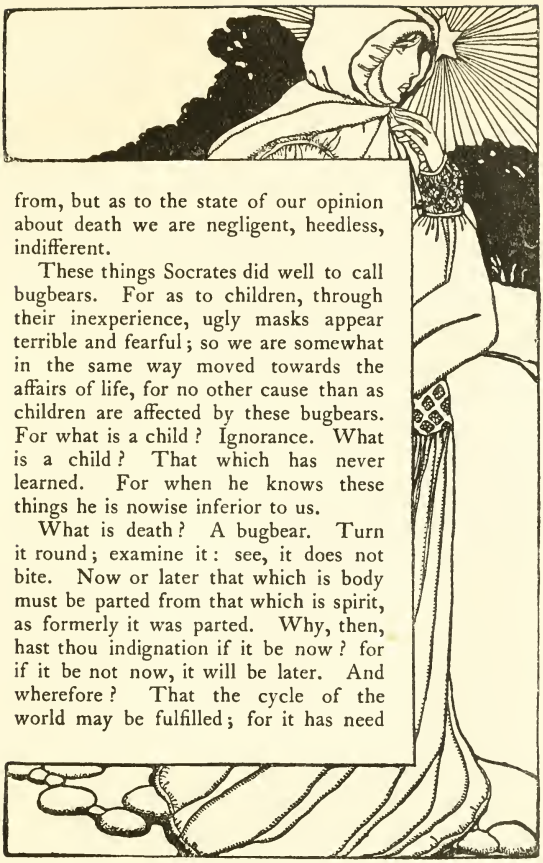


shamelessness; and our natural timidity and shamefastness into cowardice and meanness, full of terror and trouble.

For if one should transfer his timidity to the realm of the Will, and the works thereof, straightway, together with the intention of fearing to do wrong he shall have it in his power to avoid doing it; but if he use it in things out of our own power and beyond the Will, then striving to avoid things that are in others' power he shall of necessity be terrified and unsettled and troubled. For death is not fearful, nor is pain, but the fear of pain or death. And thus we praise Euripides, who said:

"Fear not to die, but fear a coward's death."

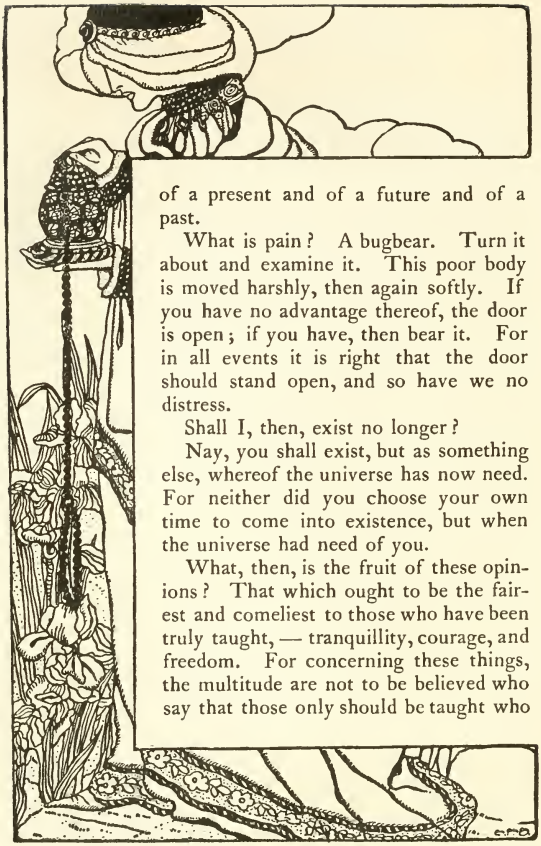
It is right, then, that we should turn our boldness against death, and our timidity against the fear of death. But now we do the contrary: death we flee



from, but as to the state of our opinion about death we are negligent, heedless, indifferent.

These things Socrates did well to call bugbears. For as to children, through their inexperience, ugly masks appear terrible and fearful; so we are somewhat in the same way moved towards the affairs of life, for no other cause than as children are affected by these bugbears. For what is a child? Ignorance. What is a child? That which has never learned. For when he knows these things he is nowise inferior to us.

What is death? A bugbear. Turn it round; examine it: see, it does not bite. Now or later that which is body must be parted from that which is spirit, as formerly it was parted. Why, then, hast thou indignation if it be now? for if it be not now, it will be later. And wherefore? That the cycle of the world may be fulfilled; for it has need



of a present and of a future and of a past.

What is pain? A bugbear. Turn it about and examine it. This poor body is moved harshly, then again softly. If you have no advantage thereof, the door is open; if you have, then bear it. For in all events it is right that the door should stand open, and so have we no distress.

Shall I, then, exist no longer?

Nay, you shall exist, but as something else, whereof the universe has now need. For neither did you choose your own time to come into existence, but when the universe had need of you.

What, then, is the fruit of these opinions? That which ought to be the fairest and comeliest to those who have been truly taught, — tranquillity, courage, and freedom. For concerning these things, the multitude are not to be believed who say that those only should be taught who

are freemen, but the philosophers rather, who say that those only are free who have been taught.

How is this?

It is thus — Is freedom anything else than the power to live as we choose?

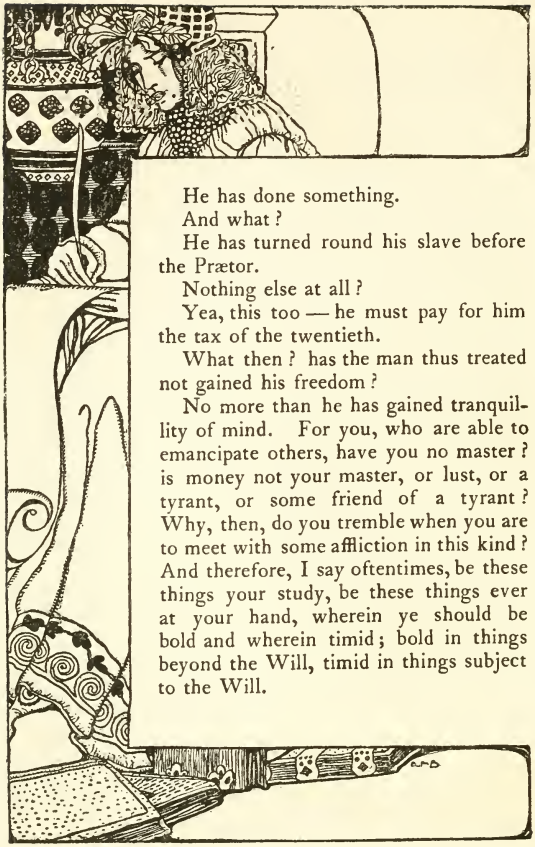
Nothing else.

Do you choose, then, to live in sin?

We do not choose it.

None, therefore, that fears or grieves or is anxious is free; but whoever is released from griefs and fears and anxieties is by that very thing released from slavery. How, then, shall we still believe you, most excellent legislators, when you say, "We permit none to be taught, save freemen?" for the philosophers say, "We permit none to be free save those who have been taught" — that is, God permits it not.

So, when a man turns round his slave before the Prætor and manumits him, has he done nothing?



He has done something.

And what?

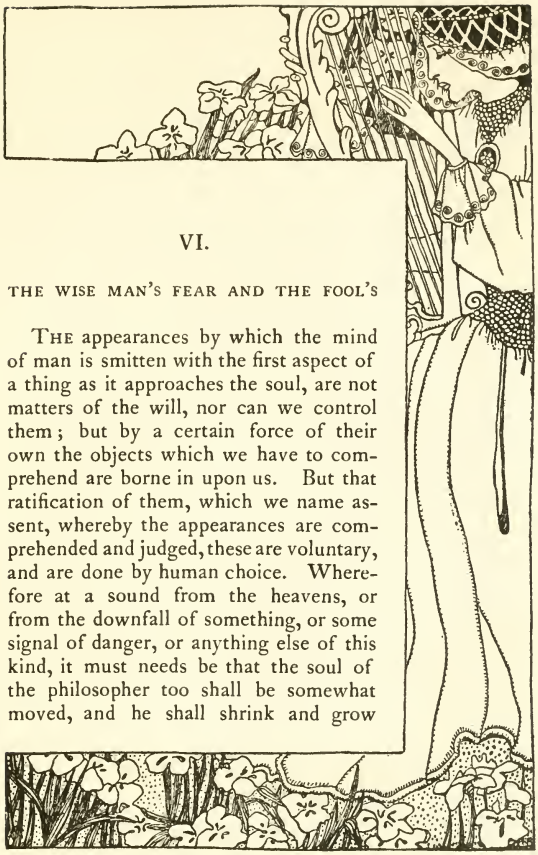
He has turned round his slave before the Prætor.

Nothing else at all?

Yea, this too — he must pay for him the tax of the twentieth.

What then? has the man thus treated not gained his freedom?

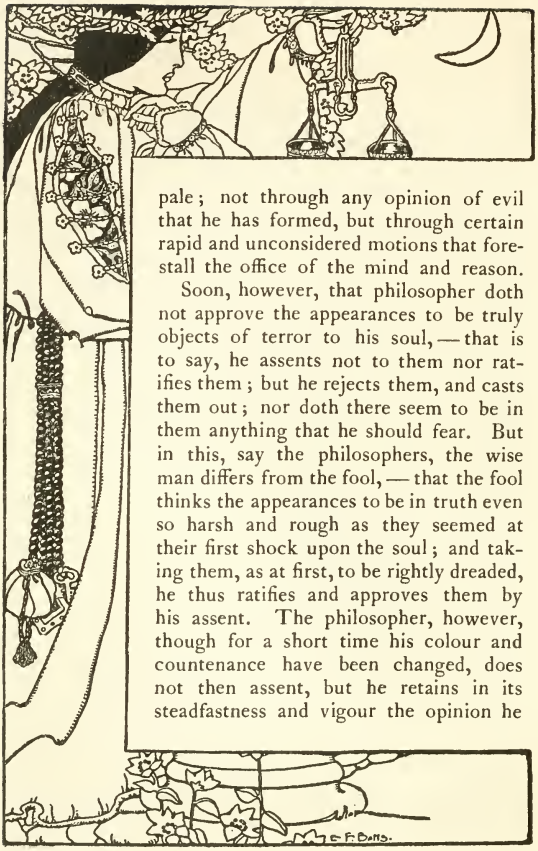
No more than he has gained tranquillity of mind. For you, who are able to emancipate others, have you no master? is money not your master, or lust, or a tyrant, or some friend of a tyrant? Why, then, do you tremble when you are to meet with some affliction in this kind? And therefore, I say oftentimes, be these things your study, be these things ever at your hand, wherein ye should be bold and wherein timid; bold in things beyond the Will, timid in things subject to the Will.



VI.

THE WISE MAN'S FEAR AND THE FOOL'S

THE appearances by which the mind of man is smitten with the first aspect of a thing as it approaches the soul, are not matters of the will, nor can we control them; but by a certain force of their own the objects which we have to comprehend are borne in upon us. But that ratification of them, which we name assent, whereby the appearances are comprehended and judged, these are voluntary, and are done by human choice. Wherefore at a sound from the heavens, or from the downfall of something, or some signal of danger, or anything else of this kind, it must needs be that the soul of the philosopher too shall be somewhat moved, and he shall shrink and grow

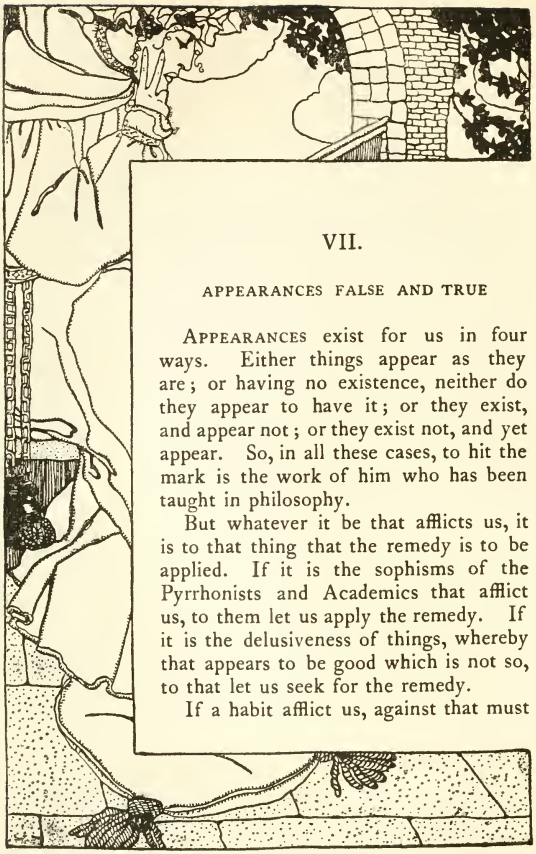


pale; not through any opinion of evil that he has formed, but through certain rapid and unconsidered motions that forestall the office of the mind and reason.

Soon, however, that philosopher doth not approve the appearances to be truly objects of terror to his soul, — that is to say, he assents not to them nor ratifies them; but he rejects them, and casts them out; nor doth there seem to be in them anything that he should fear. But in this, say the philosophers, the wise man differs from the fool, — that the fool thinks the appearances to be in truth even so harsh and rough as they seemed at their first shock upon the soul; and taking them, as at first, to be rightly dreaded, he thus ratifies and approves them by his assent. The philosopher, however, though for a short time his colour and countenance have been changed, does not then assent, but he retains in its steadfastness and vigour the opinion he

ever had of these appearances, that they are in no wise to be feared, but affright only by a false show and empty threat.

Such as is a dish of water, such is the soul; such as is the ray of light that falls on the same, such are the appearances. When the water is moved, then the ray seems also to be moved; but it is not moved. And thus when a man's mind is darkened and dizzy, it is not doctrines and virtues that are confounded, but the spirit on which they are impressed. And if that is restored, so are they.



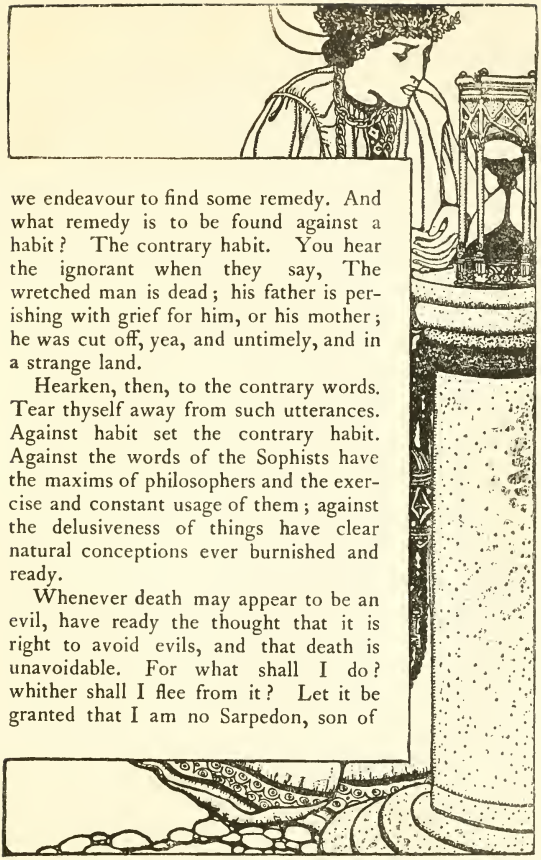
VII.

APPEARANCES FALSE AND TRUE

Appearances exist for us in four ways. Either things appear as they are; or having no existence, neither do they appear to have it; or they exist, and appear not; or they exist not, and yet appear. So, in all these cases, to hit the mark is the work of him who has been taught in philosophy.

But whatever it be that afflicts us, it is to that thing that the remedy is to be applied. If it is the sophisms of the Pyrrhonists and Academics that afflict us, to them let us apply the remedy. If it is the delusiveness of things, whereby that appears to be good which is not so, to that let us seek for the remedy.

If a habit afflict us, against that must



we endeavour to find some remedy. And what remedy is to be found against a habit? The contrary habit. You hear the ignorant when they say, The wretched man is dead; his father is perishing with grief for him, or his mother; he was cut off, yea, and untimely, and in a strange land.

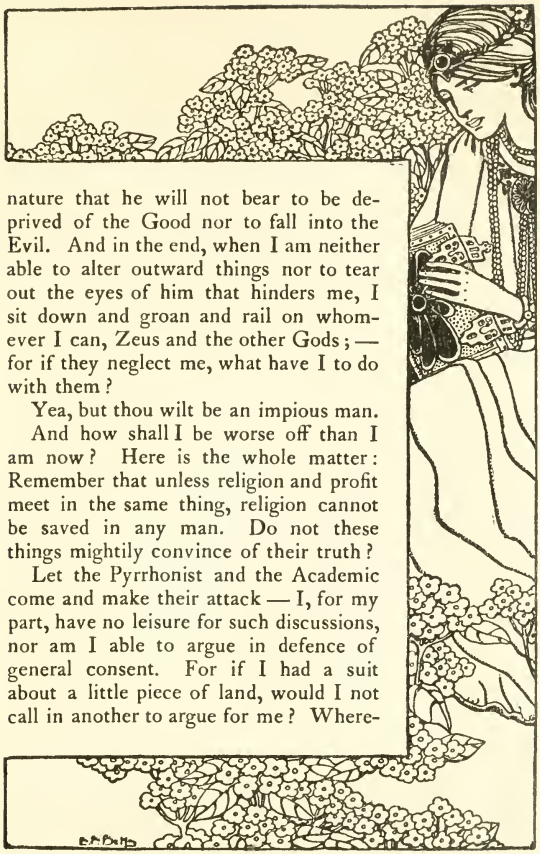
Hearken, then, to the contrary words. Tear thyself away from such utterances. Against habit set the contrary habit. Against the words of the Sophists have the maxims of philosophers and the exercise and constant usage of them; against the delusiveness of things have clear natural conceptions ever burnished and ready.

Whenever death may appear to be an evil, have ready the thought that it is right to avoid evils, and that death is unavoidable. For what shall I do? whither shall I flee from it? Let it be granted that I am no Sarpedon, son of

Zeus, to speak in that lofty style: I go, either to do great deeds myself, or to give another the chance of doing them; though I myself fail I shall not grudge it to another to do nobly.

Let it be granted that this is above us; still can we not at least rise to the height of that? And whither shall I flee from death? declare to me the place; declare to me the men among whom I shall go, to whom death comes never near; declare to me the charms against it. If I have none, what would you have me do? I cannot escape death — shall I not then escape the fear of death? shall I die lamenting and trembling?

In this is the source of suffering, to wish for something, and that it should not come to pass; and thence it is that when I am able to alter outward things at my desire, I do so, but when not, I am ready to tear out the eyes of him that hinders me. For man is so made by

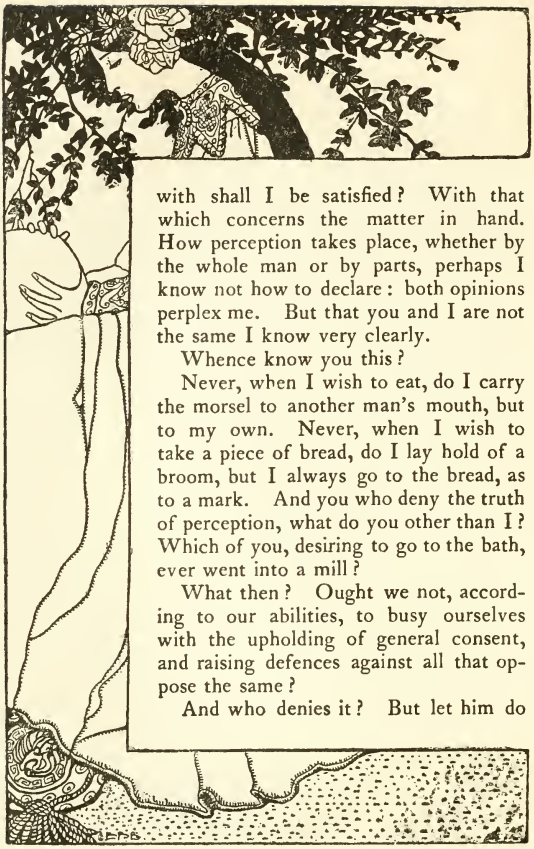


nature that he will not bear to be deprived of the Good nor to fall into the Evil. And in the end, when I am neither able to alter outward things nor to tear out the eyes of him that hinders me, I sit down and groan and rail on whomever I can, Zeus and the other Gods; — for if they neglect me, what have I to do with them?

Yea, but thou wilt be an impious man.

And how shall I be worse off than I am now? Here is the whole matter: Remember that unless religion and profit meet in the same thing, religion cannot be saved in any man. Do not these things mightily convince of their truth?

Let the Pyrrhonist and the Academic come and make their attack — I, for my part, have no leisure for such discussions, nor am I able to argue in defence of general consent. For if I had a suit about a little piece of land, would I not call in another to argue for me? Where-



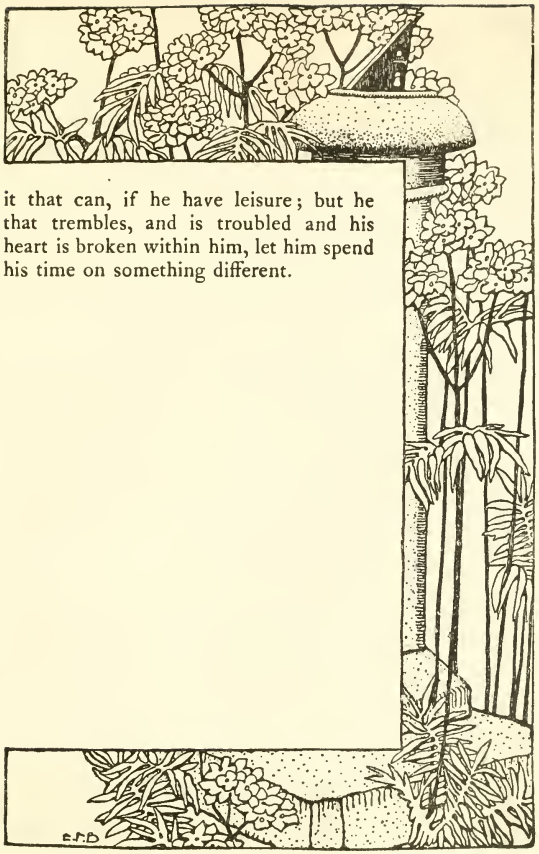
with shall I be satisfied? With that which concerns the matter in hand. How perception takes place, whether by the whole man or by parts, perhaps I know not how to declare: both opinions perplex me. But that you and I are not the same I know very clearly.

Whence know you this?

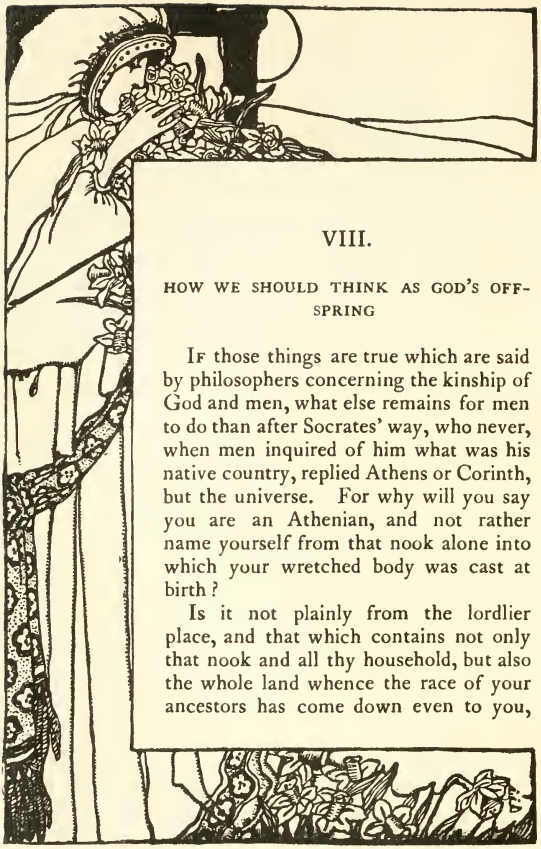
Never, when I wish to eat, do I carry the morsel to another man's mouth, but to my own. Never, when I wish to take a piece of bread, do I lay hold of a broom, but I always go to the bread, as to a mark. And you who deny the truth of perception, what do you other than I? Which of you, desiring to go to the bath, ever went into a mill?

What then? Ought we not, according to our abilities, to busy ourselves with the upholding of general consent, and raising defences against all that oppose the same?

And who denies it? But let him do



it that can, if he have leisure; but he that trembles, and is troubled and his heart is broken within him, let him spend his time on something different.

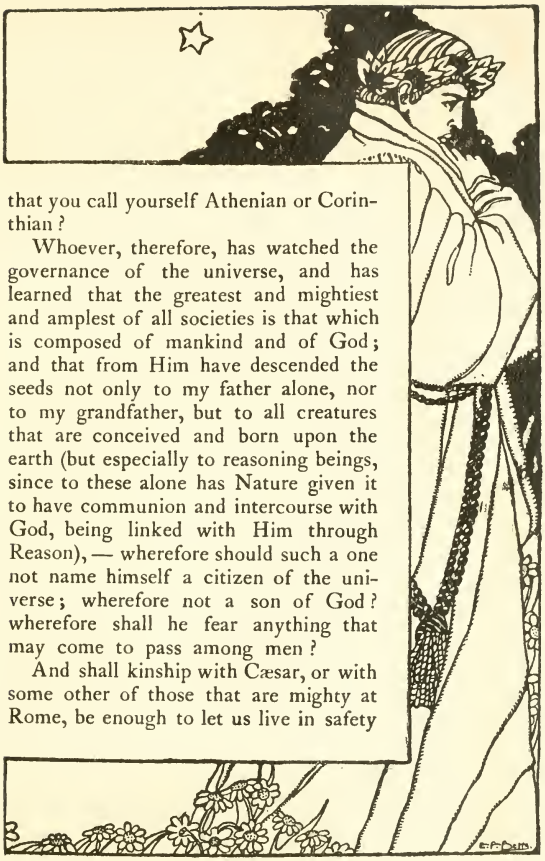


VIII.

HOW WE SHOULD THINK AS GOD'S OFFSPRING

If those things are true which are said by philosophers concerning the kinship of God and men, what else remains for men to do than after Socrates' way, who never, when men inquired of him what was his native country, replied Athens or Corinth, but the universe. For why will you say you are an Athenian, and not rather name yourself from that nook alone into which your wretched body was cast at birth?

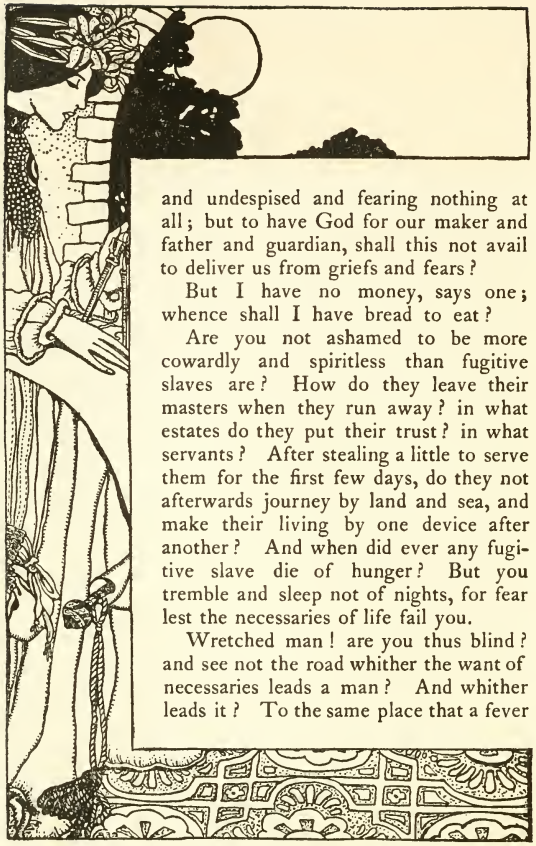
Is it not plainly from the lordlier place, and that which contains not only that nook and all thy household, but also the whole land whence the race of your ancestors has come down even to you,



that you call yourself Athenian or Corinthian?

Whoever, therefore, has watched the governance of the universe, and has learned that the greatest and mightiest and amplest of all societies is that which is composed of mankind and of God; and that from Him have descended the seeds not only to my father alone, nor to my grandfather, but to all creatures that are conceived and born upon the earth (but especially to reasoning beings, since to these alone has Nature given it to have communion and intercourse with God, being linked with Him through Reason), — wherefore should such a one not name himself a citizen of the universe; wherefore not a son of God? wherefore shall he fear anything that may come to pass among men?

And shall kinship with Cæsar, or with some other of those that are mighty at Rome, be enough to let us live in safety

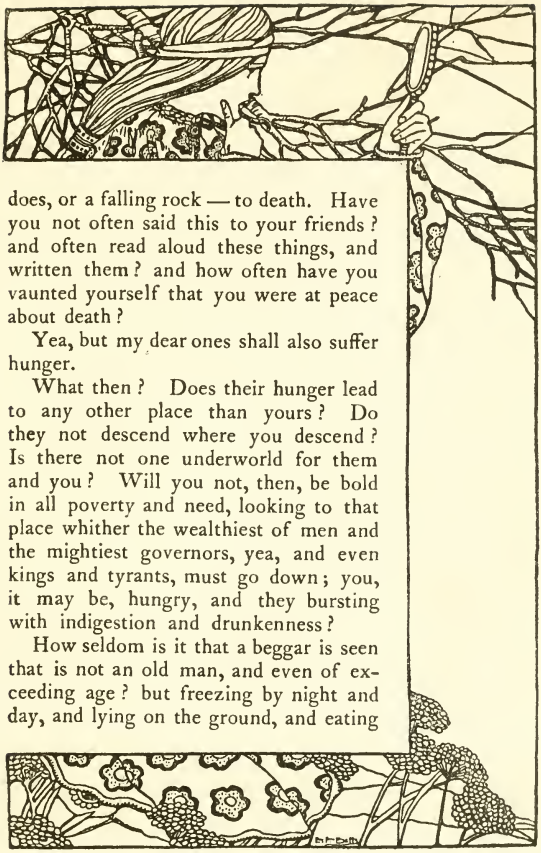


and undespised and fearing nothing at all; but to have God for our maker and father and guardian, shall this not avail to deliver us from griefs and fears?

But I have no money, says one; whence shall I have bread to eat?

Are you not ashamed to be more cowardly and spiritless than fugitive slaves are? How do they leave their masters when they run away? in what estates do they put their trust? in what servants? After stealing a little to serve them for the first few days, do they not afterwards journey by land and sea, and make their living by one device after another? And when did ever any fugitive slave die of hunger? But you tremble and sleep not of nights, for fear lest the necessaries of life fail you.

Wretched man! are you thus blind? and see not the road whither the want of necessaries leads a man? And whither leads it? To the same place that a fever

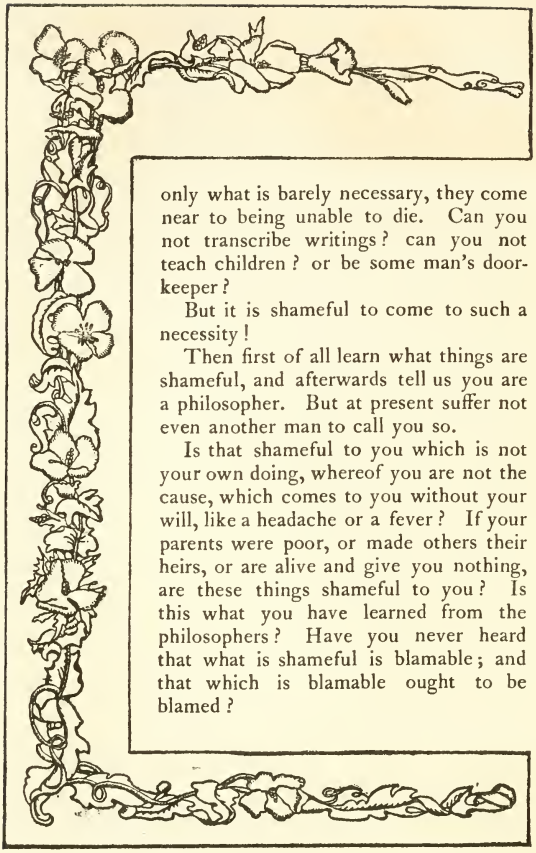


does, or a falling rock — to death. Have you not often said this to your friends? and often read aloud these things, and written them? and how often have you vaunted yourself that you were at peace about death?

Yea, but my dear ones shall also suffer hunger.

What then? Does their hunger lead to any other place than yours? Do they not descend where you descend? Is there not one underworld for them and you? Will you not, then, be bold in all poverty and need, looking to that place whither the wealthiest of men and the mightiest governors, yea, and even kings and tyrants, must go down; you, it may be, hungry, and they bursting with indigestion and drunkenness?

How seldom is it that a beggar is seen that is not an old man, and even of exceeding age? but freezing by night and day, and lying on the ground, and eating

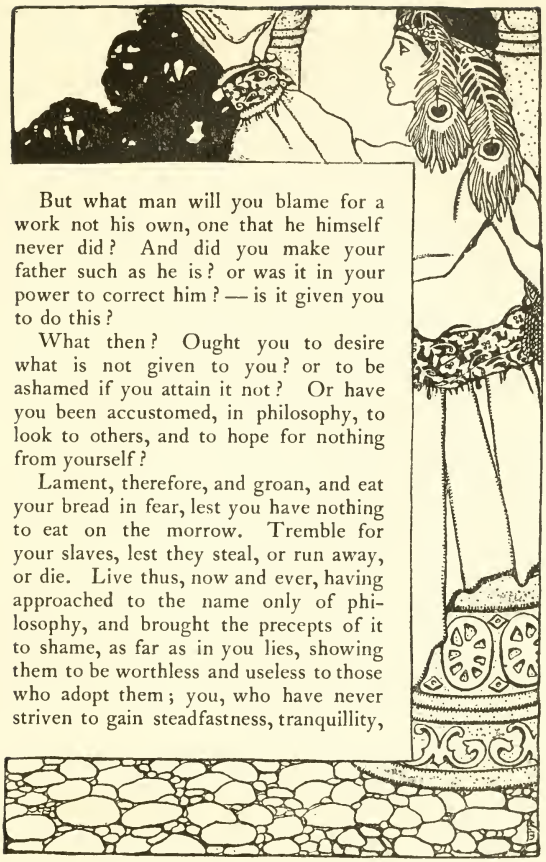


only what is barely necessary, they come near to being unable to die. Can you not transcribe writings? can you not teach children? or be some man's door-keeper?

But it is shameful to come to such a necessity!

Then first of all learn what things are shameful, and afterwards tell us you are a philosopher. But at present suffer not even another man to call you so.

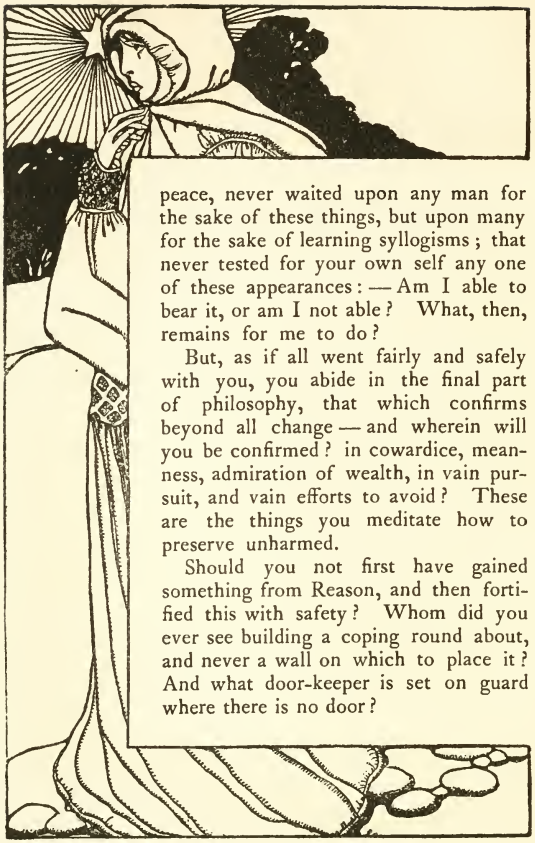
Is that shameful to you which is not your own doing, whereof you are not the cause, which comes to you without your will, like a headache or a fever? If your parents were poor, or made others their heirs, or are alive and give you nothing, are these things shameful to you? Is this what you have learned from the philosophers? Have you never heard that what is shameful is blamable; and that which is blamable ought to be blamed?



But what man will you blame for a work not his own, one that he himself never did? And did you make your father such as he is? or was it in your power to correct him? — is it given you to do this?

What then? Ought you to desire what is not given to you? or to be ashamed if you attain it not? Or have you been accustomed, in philosophy, to look to others, and to hope for nothing from yourself?

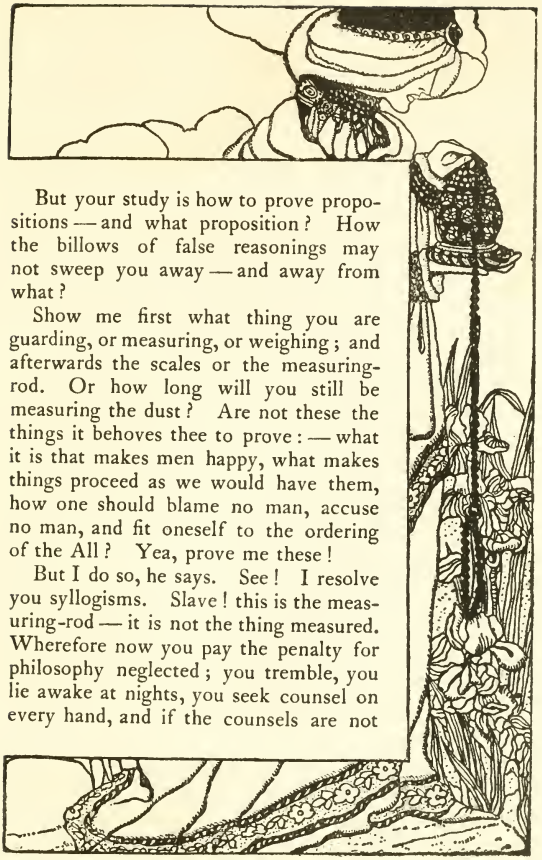
Lament, therefore, and groan, and eat your bread in fear, lest you have nothing to eat on the morrow. Tremble for your slaves, lest they steal, or run away, or die. Live thus, now and ever, having approached to the name only of philosophy, and brought the precepts of it to shame, as far as in you lies, showing them to be worthless and useless to those who adopt them; you, who have never striven to gain steadfastness, tranquillity,



peace, never waited upon any man for the sake of these things, but upon many for the sake of learning syllogisms; that never tested for your own self any one of these appearances: — Am I able to bear it, or am I not able? What, then, remains for me to do?

But, as if all went fairly and safely with you, you abide in the final part of philosophy, that which confirms beyond all change — and wherein will you be confirmed? in cowardice, meanness, admiration of wealth, in vain pursuit, and vain efforts to avoid? These are the things you meditate how to preserve unharmed.

Should you not first have gained something from Reason, and then fortified this with safety? Whom did you ever see building a coping round about, and never a wall on which to place it? And what door-keeper is set on guard where there is no door?



But your study is how to prove propositions — and what proposition? How the billows of false reasonings may not sweep you away — and away from what?

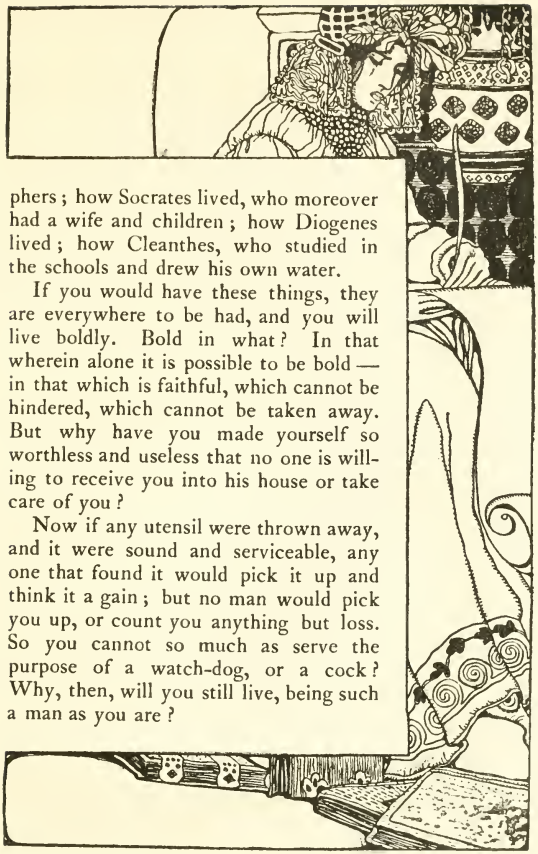
Show me first what thing you are guarding, or measuring, or weighing; and afterwards the scales or the measuring-rod. Or how long will you still be measuring the dust? Are not these the things it behoves thee to prove: — what it is that makes men happy, what makes things proceed as we would have them, how one should blame no man, accuse no man, and fit oneself to the ordering of the All? Yea, prove me these!

But I do so, he says. See! I resolve you syllogisms. Slave! this is the measuring-rod — it is not the thing measured. Wherefore now you pay the penalty for philosophy neglected; you tremble, you lie awake at nights, you seek counsel on every hand, and if the counsels are not

pleasing to all men, you think they were ill-counselled.

Then you fear hunger, as you suppose. But it is not hunger that you fear — you fear you will have no cook, or any one else to buy victuals for you, or another to take off your boots, or another to put them on, or others to rub down, or others to follow you about, so that when you have stripped yourself in the bath, and stretched yourself out as if you were crucified, you may be rubbed to and fro, and then the rubber standing by may say, Turn him round, give me his side, take hold of his head, let me have his shoulder; and then when you leave the bath and go home you may shout, Is no one bringing anything to eat? and then, Take away the plates, and wipe them.

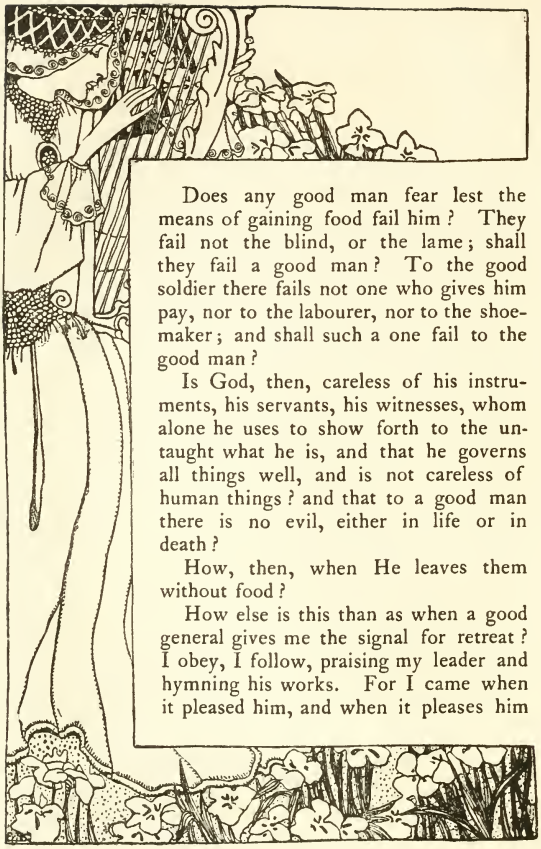
This is what you fear, — lest you be not able to live like a sick man. But learn how those live that are in health — slaves, and labourers, and true philoso-



phers; how Socrates lived, who moreover had a wife and children; how Diogenes lived; how Cleanthes, who studied in the schools and drew his own water.

If you would have these things, they are everywhere to be had, and you will live boldly. Bold in what? In that wherein alone it is possible to be bold — in that which is faithful, which cannot be hindered, which cannot be taken away. But why have you made yourself so worthless and useless that no one is willing to receive you into his house or take care of you?

Now if any utensil were thrown away, and it were sound and serviceable, any one that found it would pick it up and think it a gain; but no man would pick you up, or count you anything but loss. So you cannot so much as serve the purpose of a watch-dog, or a cock? Why, then, will you still live, being such a man as you are?



Does any good man fear lest the means of gaining food fail him? They fail not the blind, or the lame; shall they fail a good man? To the good soldier there fails not one who gives him pay, nor to the labourer, nor to the shoemaker; and shall such a one fail to the good man?

Is God, then, careless of his instruments, his servants, his witnesses, whom alone he uses to show forth to the untaught what he is, and that he governs all things well, and is not careless of human things? and that to a good man there is no evil, either in life or in death?

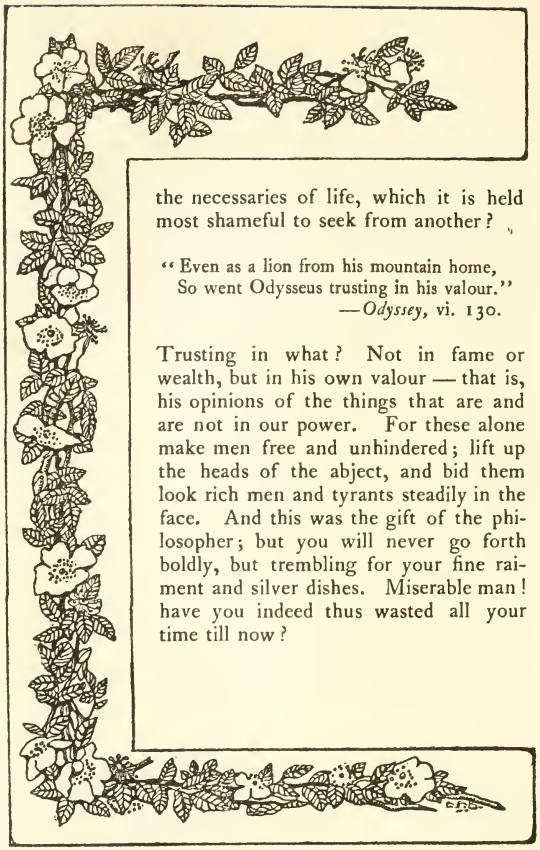
How, then, when He leaves them without food?

How else is this than as when a good general gives me the signal for retreat? I obey, I follow, praising my leader and hymning his works. For I came when it pleased him, and when it pleases him

I will go. In my lifetime also my work was to sing the praise of God, both alone to myself, and to single persons, and in presence of many. He does not provide me with many things, or with great abundance of goods; he will not have me live delicately.

Neither did he provide so for Heracles, his own son, but another man reigned over Argos and Mykenai, while he obeyed and laboured and was disciplined. And Eurystheus was what he was — no king of Argos and Mykenai, since he was not king even of himself; and Heracles was lord and leader of all the earth and sea, for he purged them of lawlessness and wrong, and brought in righteousness and holiness; naked and alone did he this.

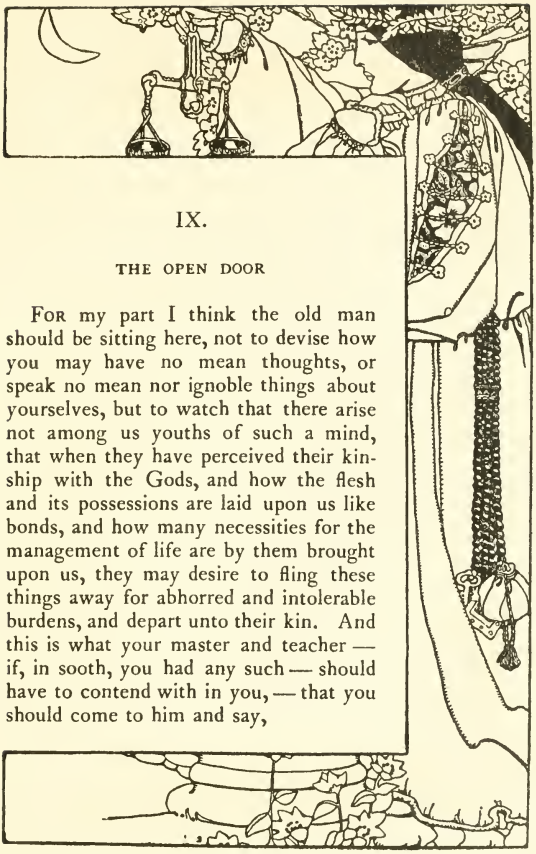
And when Odysseus was shipwrecked and cast away, did his need humble him one whit or break his spirit? But how did he go out to the maidens, to beg for



the necessaries of life, which it is held most shameful to seek from another?

"Even as a lion from his mountain home,
So went Odysseus trusting in his valour."
—*Odyssey*, vi. 130.

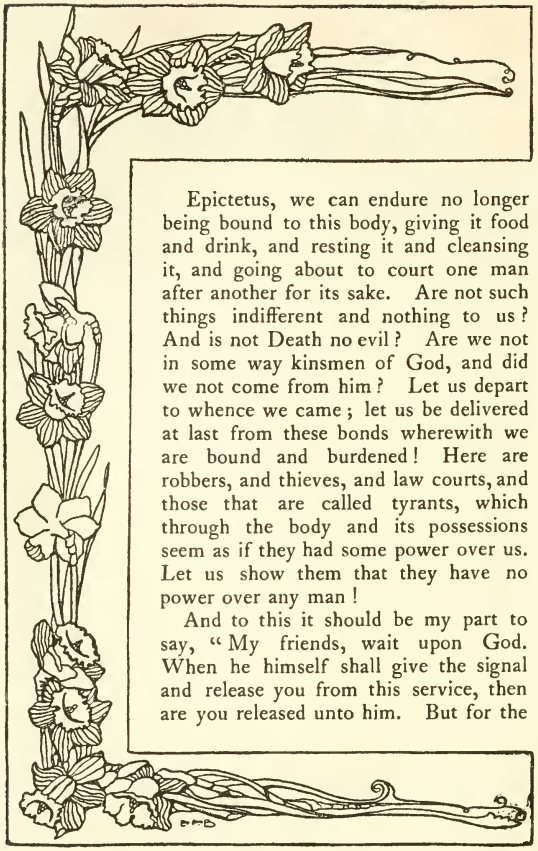
Trusting in what? Not in fame or wealth, but in his own valour — that is, his opinions of the things that are and are not in our power. For these alone make men free and unhindered; lift up the heads of the abject, and bid them look rich men and tyrants steadily in the face. And this was the gift of the philosopher; but you will never go forth boldly, but trembling for your fine raiment and silver dishes. Miserable man! have you indeed thus wasted all your time till now?



IX.

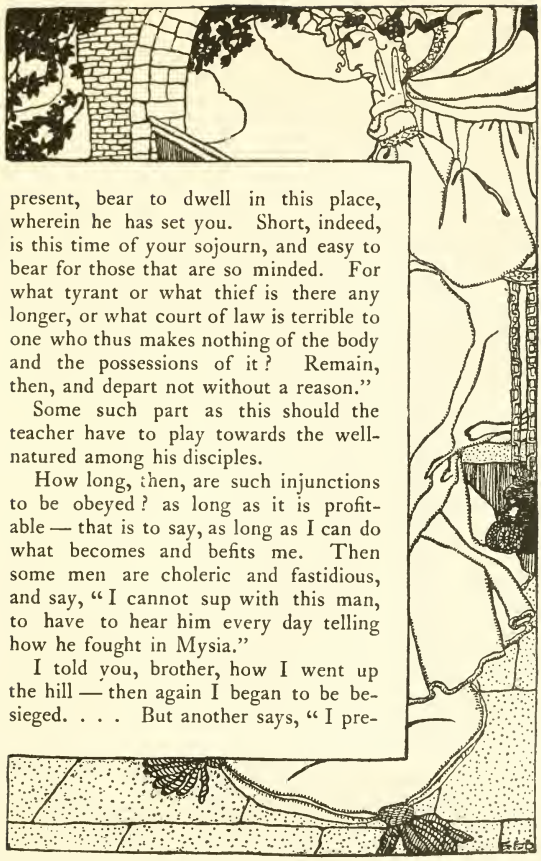
THE OPEN DOOR

For my part I think the old man should be sitting here, not to devise how you may have no mean thoughts, or speak no mean nor ignoble things about yourselves, but to watch that there arise not among us youths of such a mind, that when they have perceived their kinship with the Gods, and how the flesh and its possessions are laid upon us like bonds, and how many necessities for the management of life are by them brought upon us, they may desire to fling these things away for abhorred and intolerable burdens, and depart unto their kin. And this is what your master and teacher — if, in sooth, you had any such — should have to contend with in you, — that you should come to him and say,



Epictetus, we can endure no longer being bound to this body, giving it food and drink, and resting it and cleansing it, and going about to court one man after another for its sake. Are not such things indifferent and nothing to us? And is not Death no evil? Are we not in some way kinsmen of God, and did we not come from him? Let us depart to whence we came; let us be delivered at last from these bonds wherewith we are bound and burdened! Here are robbers, and thieves, and law courts, and those that are called tyrants, which through the body and its possessions seem as if they had some power over us. Let us show them that they have no power over any man!

And to this it should be my part to say, "My friends, wait upon God. When he himself shall give the signal and release you from this service, then are you released unto him. But for the

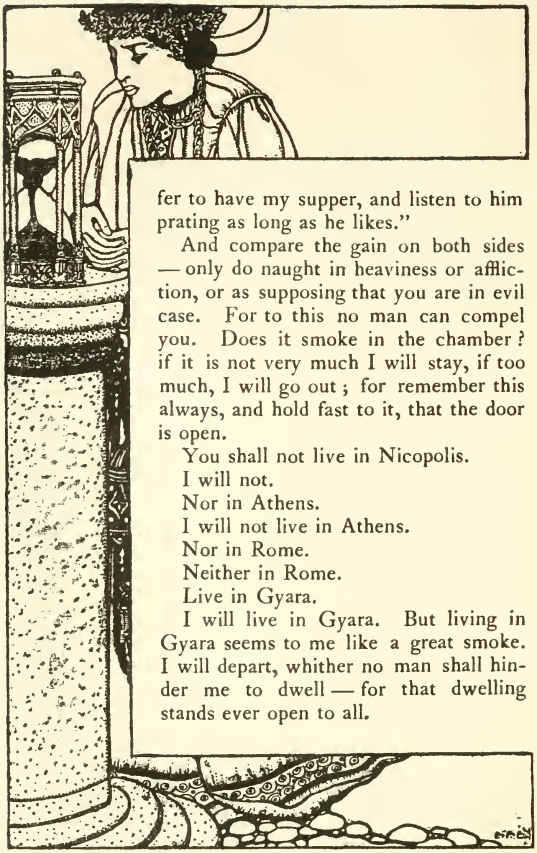


present, bear to dwell in this place, wherein he has set you. Short, indeed, is this time of your sojourn, and easy to bear for those that are so minded. For what tyrant or what thief is there any longer, or what court of law is terrible to one who thus makes nothing of the body and the possessions of it? Remain, then, and depart not without a reason."

Some such part as this should the teacher have to play towards the well-natured among his disciples.

How long, then, are such injunctions to be obeyed? as long as it is profitable — that is to say, as long as I can do what becomes and befits me. Then some men are choleric and fastidious, and say, "I cannot sup with this man, to have to hear him every day telling how he fought in Mysia."

I told you, brother, how I went up the hill — then again I began to be besieged. . . . But another says, "I pre-



fer to have my supper, and listen to him prating as long as he likes."

And compare the gain on both sides — only do naught in heaviness or affliction, or as supposing that you are in evil case. For to this no man can compel you. Does it smoke in the chamber? if it is not very much I will stay, if too much, I will go out; for remember this always, and hold fast to it, that the door is open.

You shall not live in Nicopolis.

I will not.

Nor in Athens.

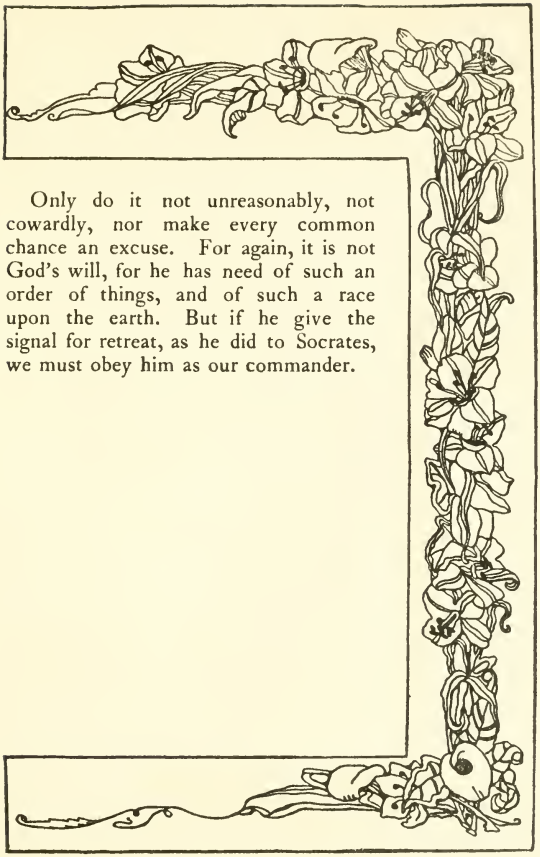
I will not live in Athens.

Nor in Rome.

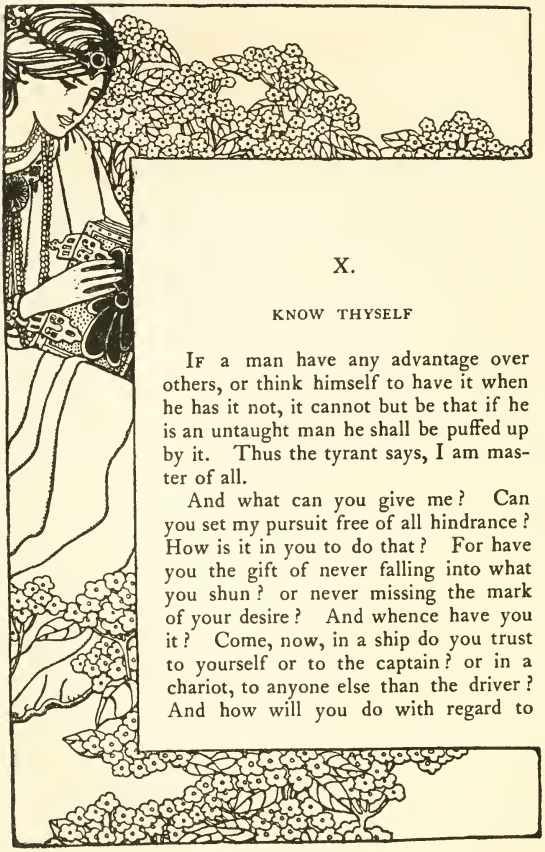
Neither in Rome.

Live in Gyara.

I will live in Gyara. But living in Gyara seems to me like a great smoke. I will depart, whither no man shall hinder me to dwell — for that dwelling stands ever open to all.



Only do it not unreasonably, not cowardly, nor make every common chance an excuse. For again, it is not God's will, for he has need of such an order of things, and of such a race upon the earth. But if he give the signal for retreat, as he did to Socrates, we must obey him as our commander.

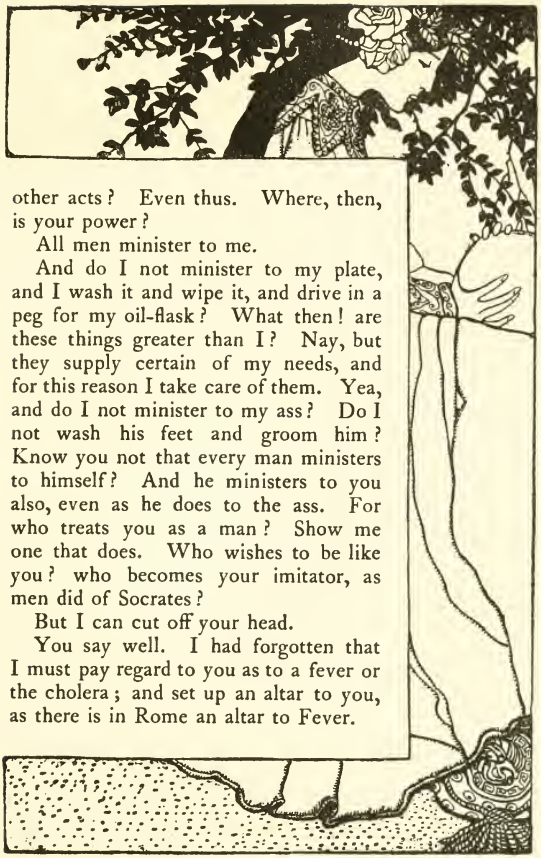


X.

KNOW THYSELF

If a man have any advantage over others, or think himself to have it when he has it not, it cannot but be that if he is an untaught man he shall be puffed up by it. Thus the tyrant says, I am master of all.

And what can you give me? Can you set my pursuit free of all hindrance? How is it in you to do that? For have you the gift of never falling into what you shun? or never missing the mark of your desire? And whence have you it? Come, now, in a ship do you trust to yourself or to the captain? or in a chariot, to anyone else than the driver? And how will you do with regard to



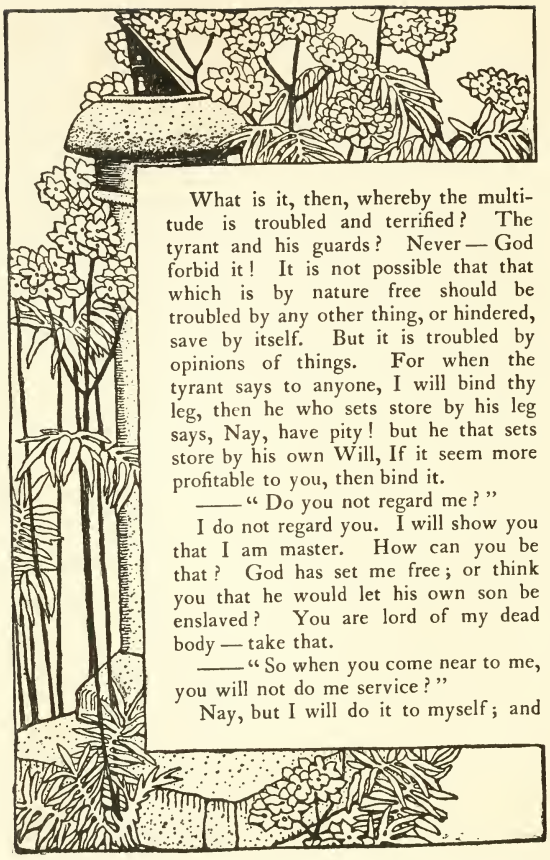
other acts? Even thus. Where, then, is your power?

All men minister to me.

And do I not minister to my plate, and I wash it and wipe it, and drive in a peg for my oil-flask? What then! are these things greater than I? Nay, but they supply certain of my needs, and for this reason I take care of them. Yea, and do I not minister to my ass? Do I not wash his feet and groom him? Know you not that every man ministers to himself? And he ministers to you also, even as he does to the ass. For who treats you as a man? Show me one that does. Who wishes to be like you? who becomes your imitator, as men did of Socrates?

But I can cut off your head.

You say well. I had forgotten that I must pay regard to you as to a fever or the cholera; and set up an altar to you, as there is in Rome an altar to Fever.



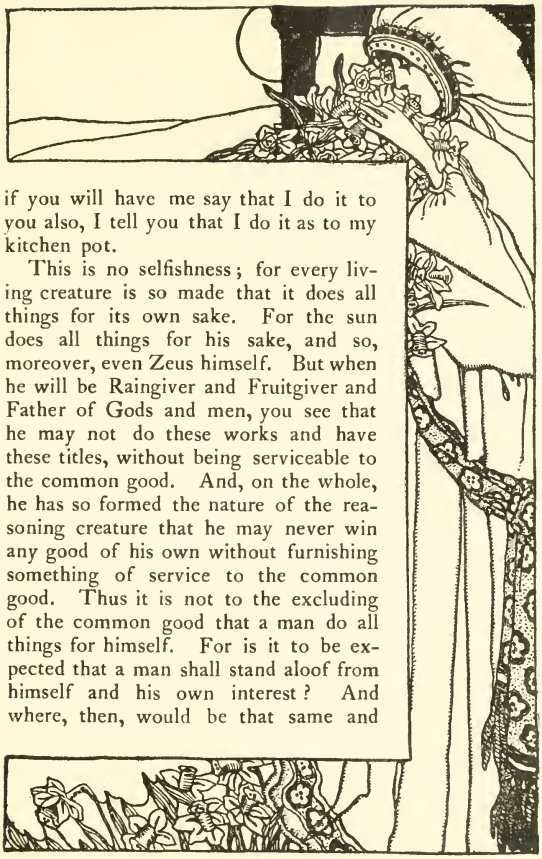
What is it, then, whereby the multitude is troubled and terrified? The tyrant and his guards? Never — God forbid it! It is not possible that that which is by nature free should be troubled by any other thing, or hindered, save by itself. But it is troubled by opinions of things. For when the tyrant says to anyone, I will bind thy leg, then he who sets store by his leg says, Nay, have pity! but he that sets store by his own Will, If it seem more profitable to you, then bind it.

—— "Do you not regard me?"

I do not regard you. I will show you that I am master. How can you be that? God has set me free; or think you that he would let his own son be enslaved? You are lord of my dead body — take that.

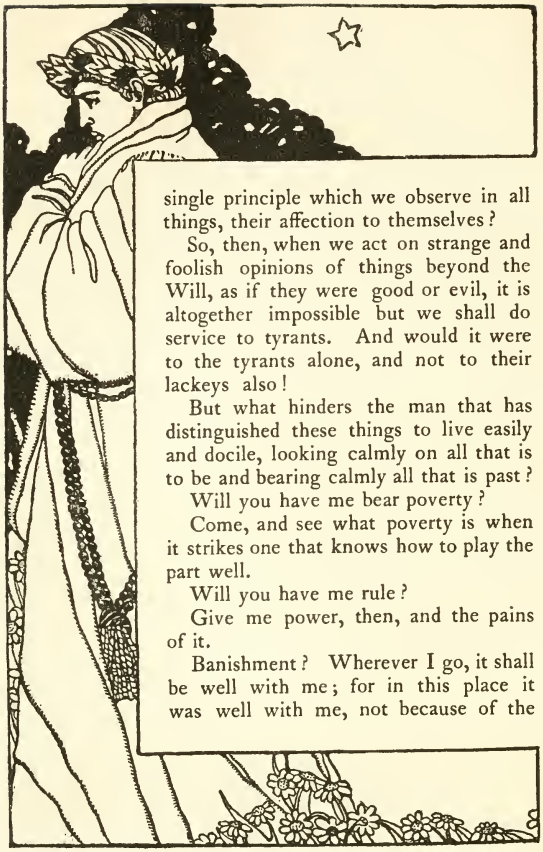
—— "So when you come near to me, you will not do me service?"

Nay, but I will do it to myself; and



if you will have me say that I do it to you also, I tell you that I do it as to my kitchen pot.

This is no selfishness; for every living creature is so made that it does all things for its own sake. For the sun does all things for his sake, and so, moreover, even Zeus himself. But when he will be Raingiver and Fruitgiver and Father of Gods and men, you see that he may not do these works and have these titles, without being serviceable to the common good. And, on the whole, he has so formed the nature of the reasoning creature that he may never win any good of his own without furnishing something of service to the common good. Thus it is not to the excluding of the common good that a man do all things for himself. For is it to be expected that a man shall stand aloof from himself and his own interest? And where, then, would be that same and



single principle which we observe in all things, their affection to themselves?

So, then, when we act on strange and foolish opinions of things beyond the Will, as if they were good or evil, it is altogether impossible but we shall do service to tyrants. And would it were to the tyrants alone, and not to their lackeys also!

But what hinders the man that has distinguished these things to live easily and docile, looking calmly on all that is to be and bearing calmly all that is past?

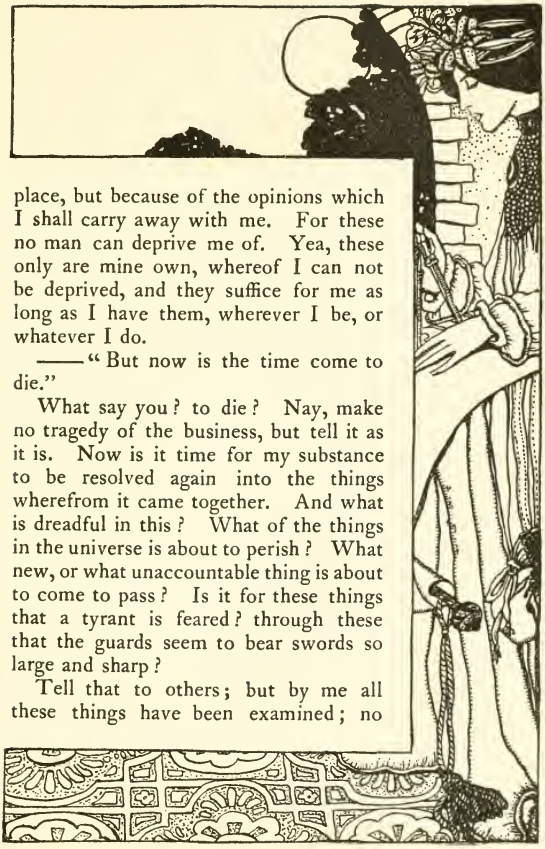
Will you have me bear poverty?

Come, and see what poverty is when it strikes one that knows how to play the part well.

Will you have me rule?

Give me power, then, and the pains of it.

Banishment? Wherever I go, it shall be well with me; for in this place it was well with me, not because of the

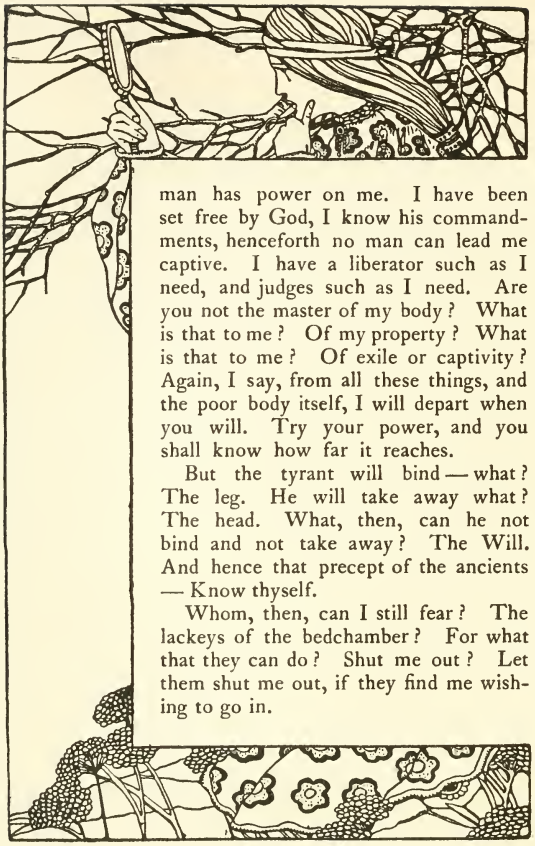


place, but because of the opinions which I shall carry away with me. For these no man can deprive me of. Yea, these only are mine own, whereof I can not be deprived, and they suffice for me as long as I have them, wherever I be, or whatever I do.

——"But now is the time come to die."

What say you? to die? Nay, make no tragedy of the business, but tell it as it is. Now is it time for my substance to be resolved again into the things wherefrom it came together. And what is dreadful in this? What of the things in the universe is about to perish? What new, or what unaccountable thing is about to come to pass? Is it for these things that a tyrant is feared? through these that the guards seem to bear swords so large and sharp?

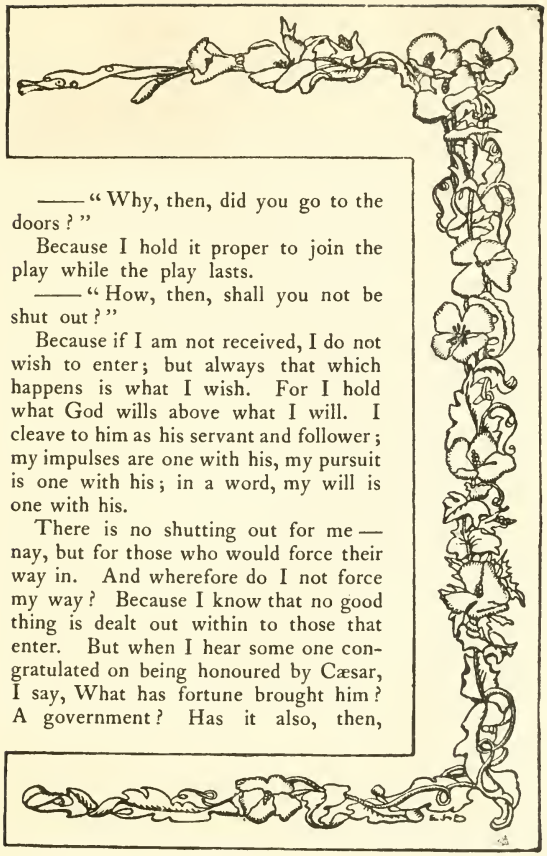
Tell that to others; but by me all these things have been examined; no



man has power on me. I have been set free by God, I know his commandments, henceforth no man can lead me captive. I have a liberator such as I need, and judges such as I need. Are you not the master of my body? What is that to me? Of my property? What is that to me? Of exile or captivity? Again, I say, from all these things, and the poor body itself, I will depart when you will. Try your power, and you shall know how far it reaches.

But the tyrant will bind — what? The leg. He will take away what? The head. What, then, can he not bind and not take away? The Will. And hence that precept of the ancients — Know thyself.

Whom, then, can I still fear? The lackeys of the bedchamber? For what that they can do? Shut me out? Let them shut me out, if they find me wishing to go in.



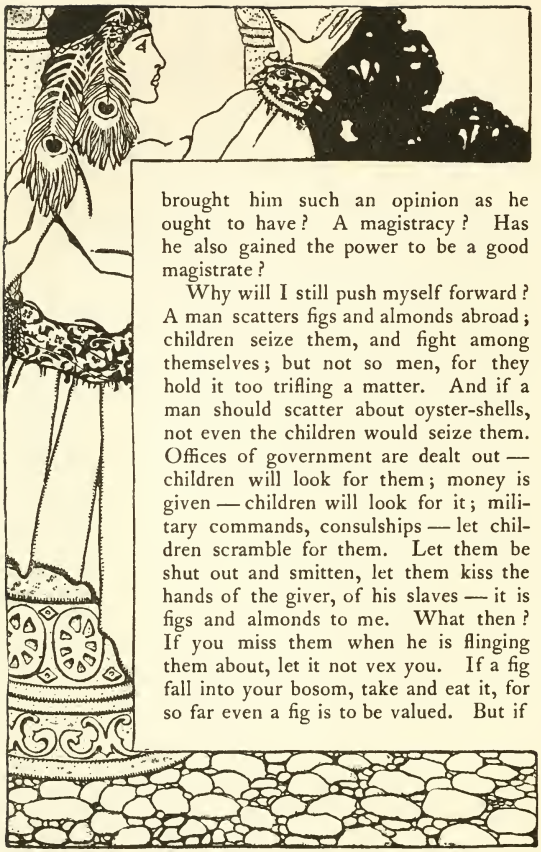
—— "Why, then, did you go to the doors?"

Because I hold it proper to join the play while the play lasts.

—— "How, then, shall you not be shut out?"

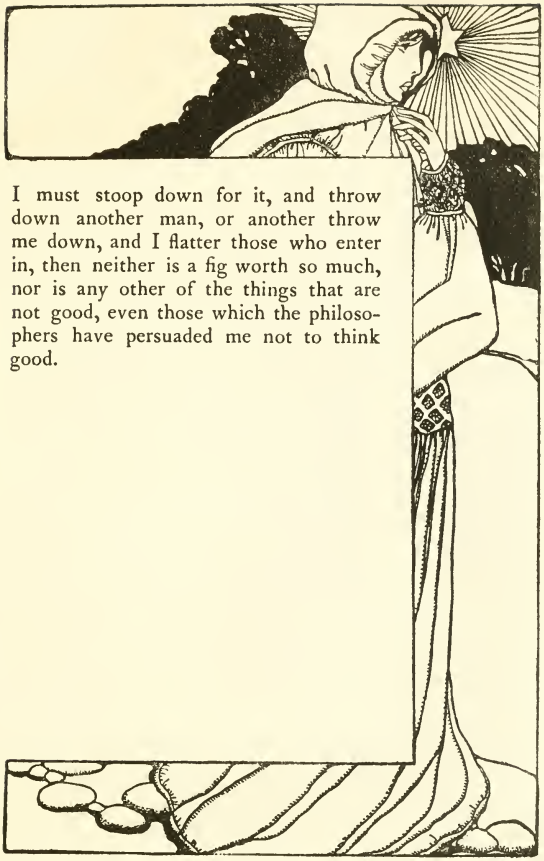
Because if I am not received, I do not wish to enter; but always that which happens is what I wish. For I hold what God wills above what I will. I cleave to him as his servant and follower; my impulses are one with his, my pursuit is one with his; in a word, my will is one with his.

There is no shutting out for me — nay, but for those who would force their way in. And wherefore do I not force my way? Because I know that no good thing is dealt out within to those that enter. But when I hear some one congratulated on being honoured by Cæsar, I say, What has fortune brought him? A government? Has it also, then,

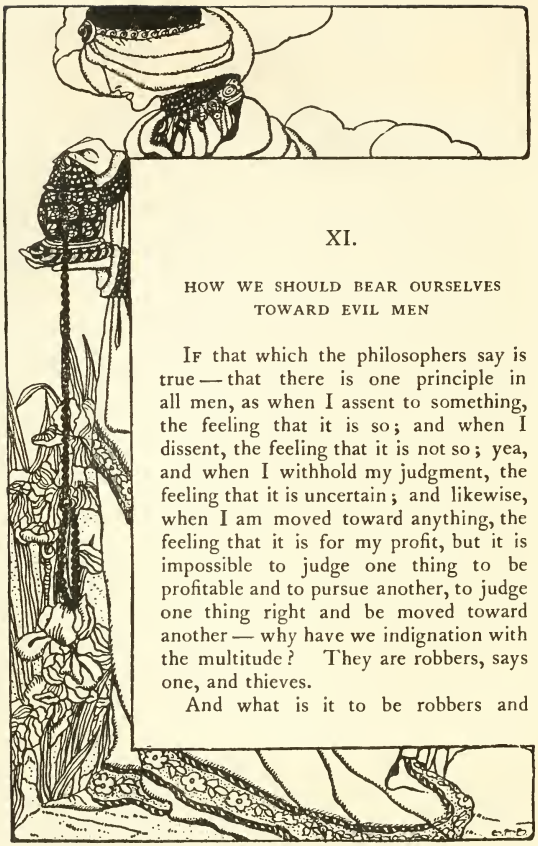


brought him such an opinion as he ought to have? A magistracy? Has he also gained the power to be a good magistrate?

Why will I still push myself forward? A man scatters figs and almonds abroad; children seize them, and fight among themselves; but not so men, for they hold it too trifling a matter. And if a man should scatter about oyster-shells, not even the children would seize them. Offices of government are dealt out — children will look for them; money is given — children will look for it; military commands, consulships — let children scramble for them. Let them be shut out and smitten, let them kiss the hands of the giver, of his slaves — it is figs and almonds to me. What then? If you miss them when he is flinging them about, let it not vex you. If a fig fall into your bosom, take and eat it, for so far even a fig is to be valued. But if



I must stoop down for it, and throw down another man, or another throw me down, and I flatter those who enter in, then neither is a fig worth so much, nor is any other of the things that are not good, even those which the philosophers have persuaded me not to think good.

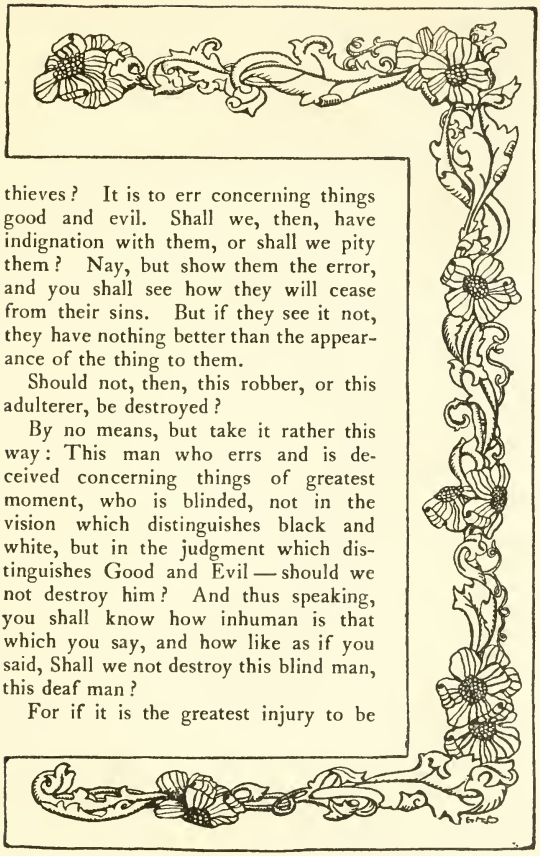


XI.

HOW WE SHOULD BEAR OURSELVES TOWARD EVIL MEN

If that which the philosophers say is true — that there is one principle in all men, as when I assent to something, the feeling that it is so; and when I dissent, the feeling that it is not so; yea, and when I withhold my judgment, the feeling that it is uncertain; and likewise, when I am moved toward anything, the feeling that it is for my profit, but it is impossible to judge one thing to be profitable and to pursue another, to judge one thing right and be moved toward another — why have we indignation with the multitude? They are robbers, says one, and thieves.

And what is it to be robbers and

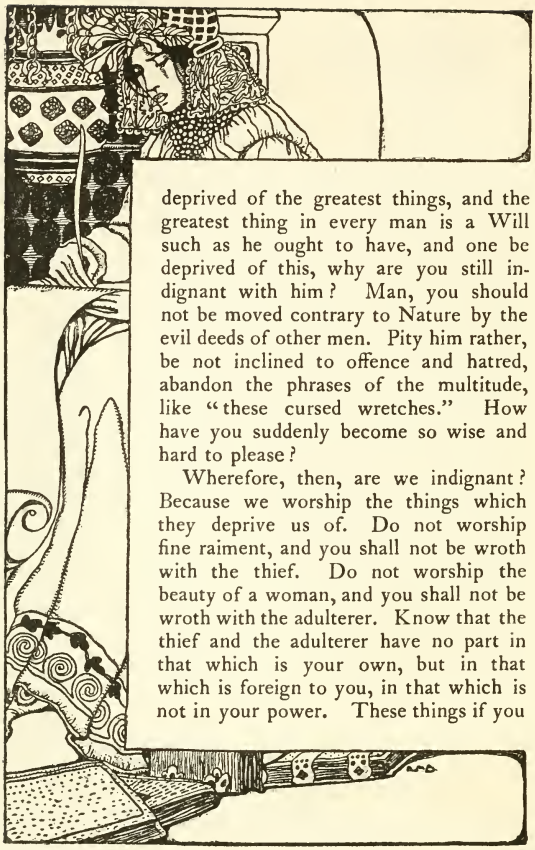


thieves? It is to err concerning things good and evil. Shall we, then, have indignation with them, or shall we pity them? Nay, but show them the error, and you shall see how they will cease from their sins. But if they see it not, they have nothing better than the appearance of the thing to them.

Should not, then, this robber, or this adulterer, be destroyed?

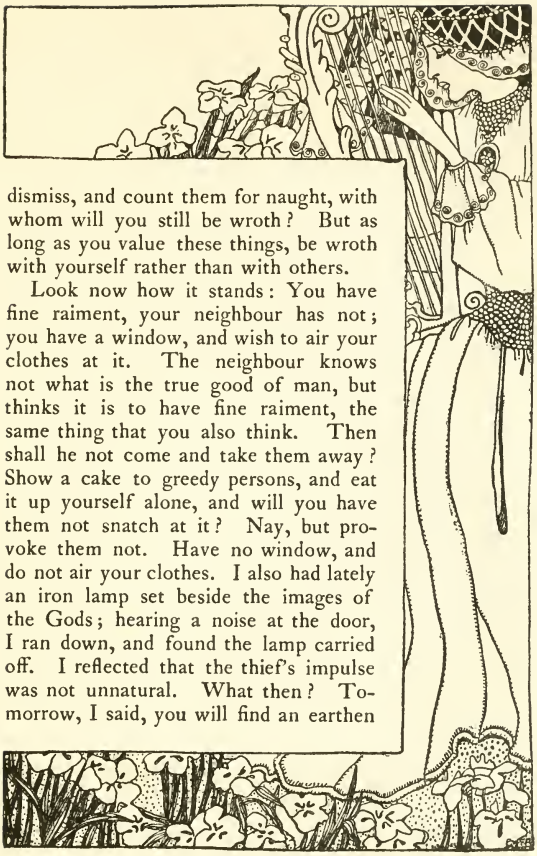
By no means, but take it rather this way: This man who errs and is deceived concerning things of greatest moment, who is blinded, not in the vision which distinguishes black and white, but in the judgment which distinguishes Good and Evil — should we not destroy him? And thus speaking, you shall know how inhuman is that which you say, and how like as if you said, Shall we not destroy this blind man, this deaf man?

For if it is the greatest injury to be



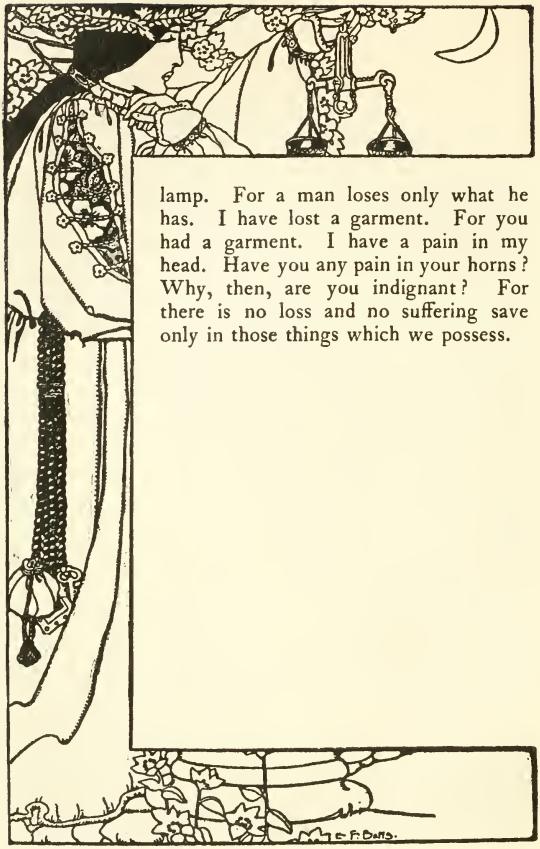
deprived of the greatest things, and the greatest thing in every man is a Will such as he ought to have, and one be deprived of this, why are you still indignant with him? Man, you should not be moved contrary to Nature by the evil deeds of other men. Pity him rather, be not inclined to offence and hatred, abandon the phrases of the multitude, like "these cursed wretches." How have you suddenly become so wise and hard to please?

Wherefore, then, are we indignant? Because we worship the things which they deprive us of. Do not worship fine raiment, and you shall not be wroth with the thief. Do not worship the beauty of a woman, and you shall not be wroth with the adulterer. Know that the thief and the adulterer have no part in that which is your own, but in that which is foreign to you, in that which is not in your power. These things if you



dismiss, and count them for naught, with whom will you still be wroth? But as long as you value these things, be wroth with yourself rather than with others.

Look now how it stands: You have fine raiment, your neighbour has not; you have a window, and wish to air your clothes at it. The neighbour knows not what is the true good of man, but thinks it is to have fine raiment, the same thing that you also think. Then shall he not come and take them away? Show a cake to greedy persons, and eat it up yourself alone, and will you have them not snatch at it? Nay, but provoke them not. Have no window, and do not air your clothes. I also had lately an iron lamp set beside the images of the Gods; hearing a noise at the door, I ran down, and found the lamp carried off. I reflected that the thief's impulse was not unnatural. What then? Tomorrow, I said, you will find an earthen

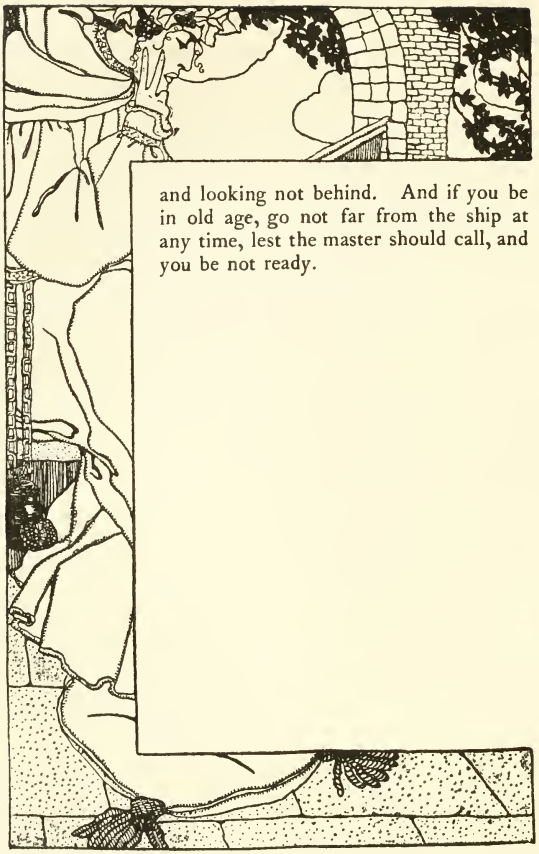


lamp. For a man loses only what he has. I have lost a garment. For you had a garment. I have a pain in my head. Have you any pain in your horns? Why, then, are you indignant? For there is no loss and no suffering save only in those things which we possess.

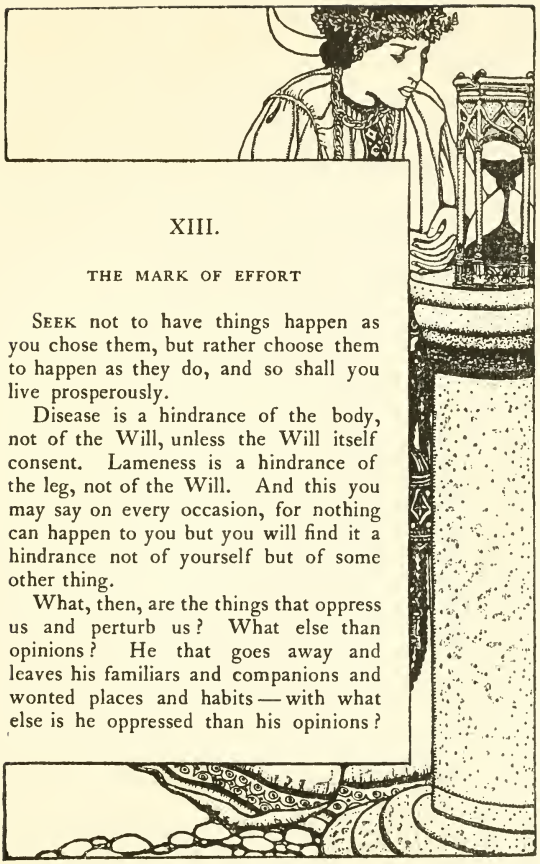
XII.

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE

EVEN as in a sea voyage, when the ship is brought to anchor, and you go out to fetch in water, you make a by-work of gathering a few roots and shells by the way, but have need ever to keep your mind fixed on the ship, and constantly to look round, lest at any time the master of the ship call, and you must, if he call, cast away all those things, lest you be treated like the sheep that are bound and thrown into the hold: So it is with human life also. And if there be given wife and children instead of shells and roots, nothing shall hinder us to take them. But if the master call, run to the ship, forsaking all those things,



and looking not behind. And if you be in old age, go not far from the ship at any time, lest the master should call, and you be not ready.



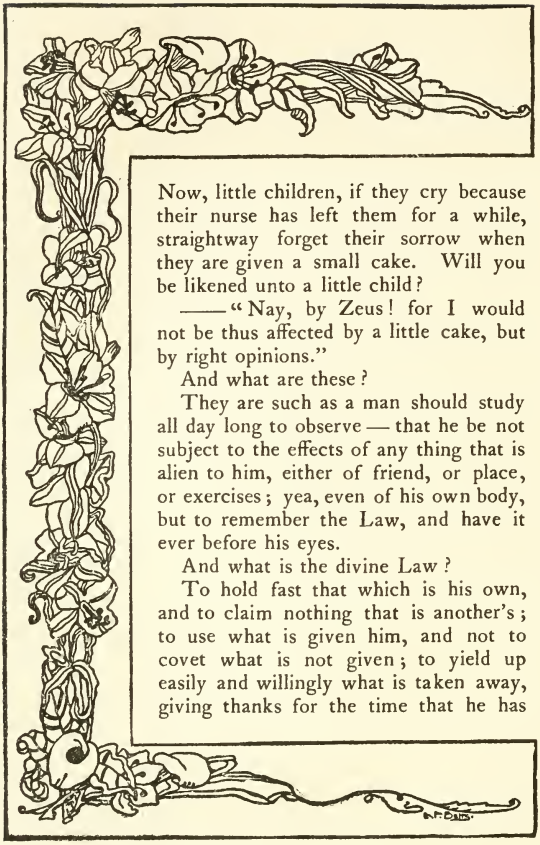
XIII.

THE MARK OF EFFORT

Seek not to have things happen as you chose them, but rather choose them to happen as they do, and so shall you live prosperously.

Disease is a hindrance of the body, not of the Will, unless the Will itself consent. Lameness is a hindrance of the leg, not of the Will. And this you may say on every occasion, for nothing can happen to you but you will find it a hindrance not of yourself but of some other thing.

What, then, are the things that oppress us and perturb us? What else than opinions? He that goes away and leaves his familiars and companions and wonted places and habits — with what else is he oppressed than his opinions?



Now, little children, if they cry because their nurse has left them for a while, straightway forget their sorrow when they are given a small cake. Will you be likened unto a little child?

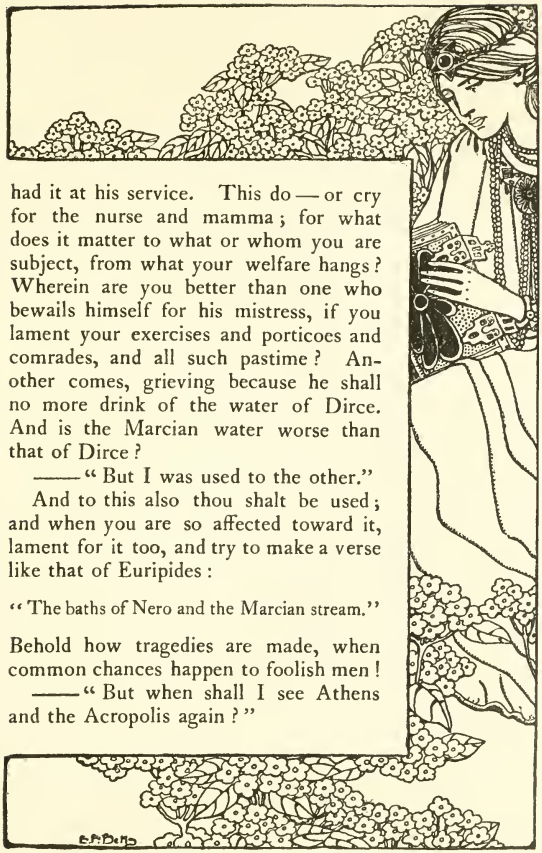
——"Nay, by Zeus! for I would not be thus affected by a little cake, but by right opinions."

And what are these?

They are such as a man should study all day long to observe — that he be not subject to the effects of any thing that is alien to him, either of friend, or place, or exercises; yea, even of his own body, but to remember the Law, and have it ever before his eyes.

And what is the divine Law?

To hold fast that which is his own, and to claim nothing that is another's; to use what is given him, and not to covet what is not given; to yield up easily and willingly what is taken away, giving thanks for the time that he has



had it at his service. This do — or cry for the nurse and mamma; for what does it matter to what or whom you are subject, from what your welfare hangs? Wherein are you better than one who bewails himself for his mistress, if you lament your exercises and porticoes and comrades, and all such pastime? Another comes, grieving because he shall no more drink of the water of Dirce. And is the Marcian water worse than that of Dirce?

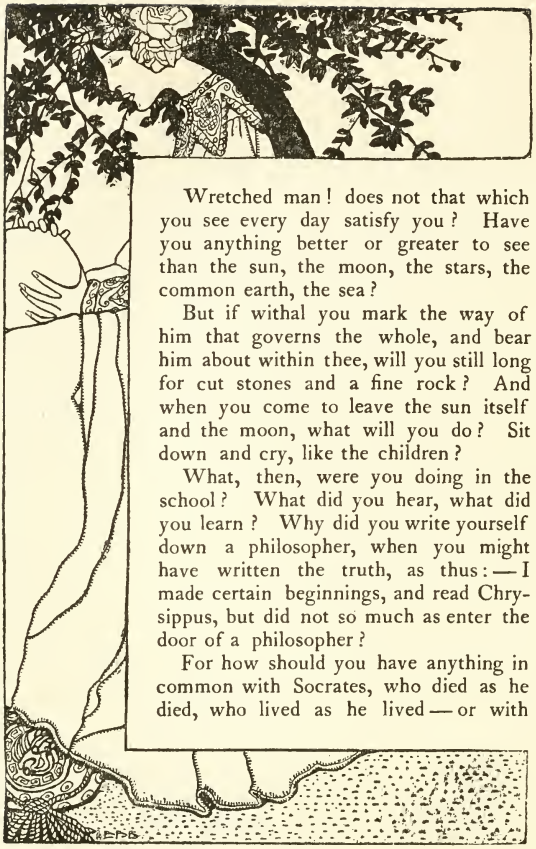
——"But I was used to the other."

And to this also thou shalt be used; and when you are so affected toward it, lament for it too, and try to make a verse like that of Euripides:

"The baths of Nero and the Marcian stream."

Behold how tragedies are made, when common chances happen to foolish men!

——"But when shall I see Athens and the Acropolis again?"

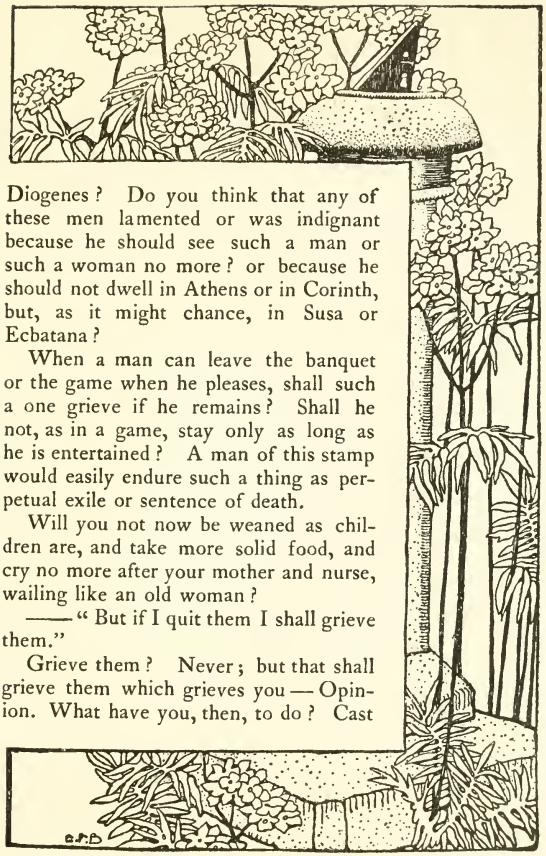


Wretched man! does not that which you see every day satisfy you? Have you anything better or greater to see than the sun, the moon, the stars, the common earth, the sea?

But if withal you mark the way of him that governs the whole, and bear him about within thee, will you still long for cut stones and a fine rock? And when you come to leave the sun itself and the moon, what will you do? Sit down and cry, like the children?

What, then, were you doing in the school? What did you hear, what did you learn? Why did you write yourself down a philosopher, when you might have written the truth, as thus: — I made certain beginnings, and read Chrysippus, but did not so much as enter the door of a philosopher?

For how should you have anything in common with Socrates, who died as he died, who lived as he lived — or with



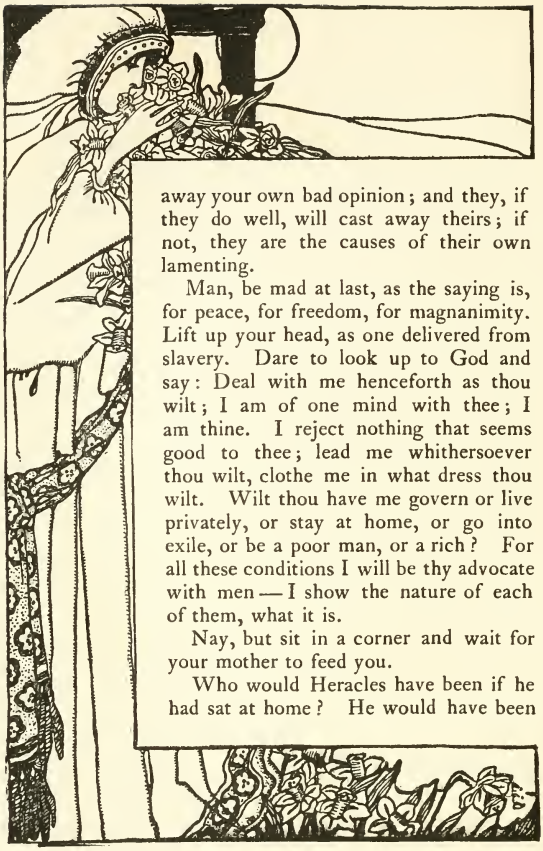
Diogenes? Do you think that any of these men lamented or was indignant because he should see such a man or such a woman no more? or because he should not dwell in Athens or in Corinth, but, as it might chance, in Susa or Ecbatana?

When a man can leave the banquet or the game when he pleases, shall such a one grieve if he remains? Shall he not, as in a game, stay only as long as he is entertained? A man of this stamp would easily endure such a thing as perpetual exile or sentence of death.

Will you not now be weaned as children are, and take more solid food, and cry no more after your mother and nurse, wailing like an old woman?

——"But if I quit them I shall grieve them."

Grieve them? Never; but that shall grieve them which grieves you — Opinion. What have you, then, to do? Cast

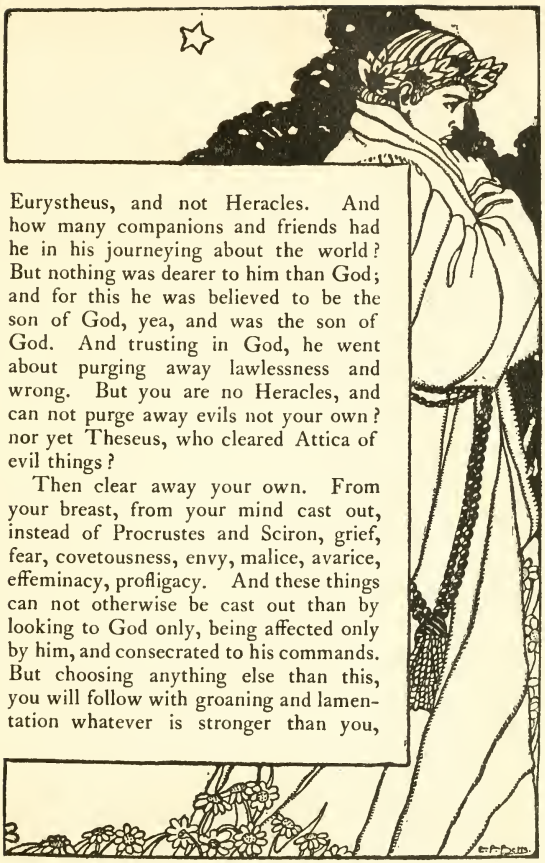


away your own bad opinion; and they, if they do well, will cast away theirs; if not, they are the causes of their own lamenting.

Man, be mad at last, as the saying is, for peace, for freedom, for magnanimity. Lift up your head, as one delivered from slavery. Dare to look up to God and say: Deal with me henceforth as thou wilt; I am of one mind with thee; I am thine. I reject nothing that seems good to thee; lead me whithersoever thou wilt, clothe me in what dress thou wilt. Wilt thou have me govern or live privately, or stay at home, or go into exile, or be a poor man, or a rich? For all these conditions I will be thy advocate with men — I show the nature of each of them, what it is.

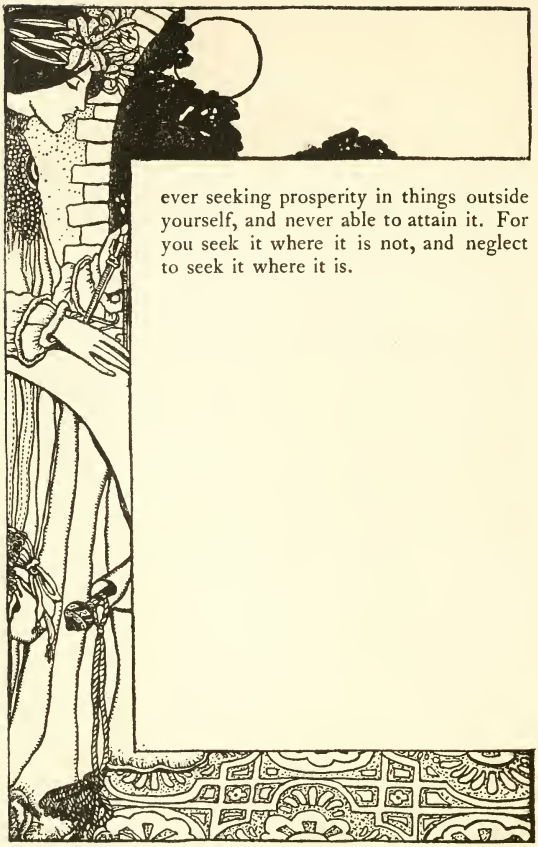
Nay, but sit in a corner and wait for your mother to feed you.

Who would Heracles have been if he had sat at home? He would have been

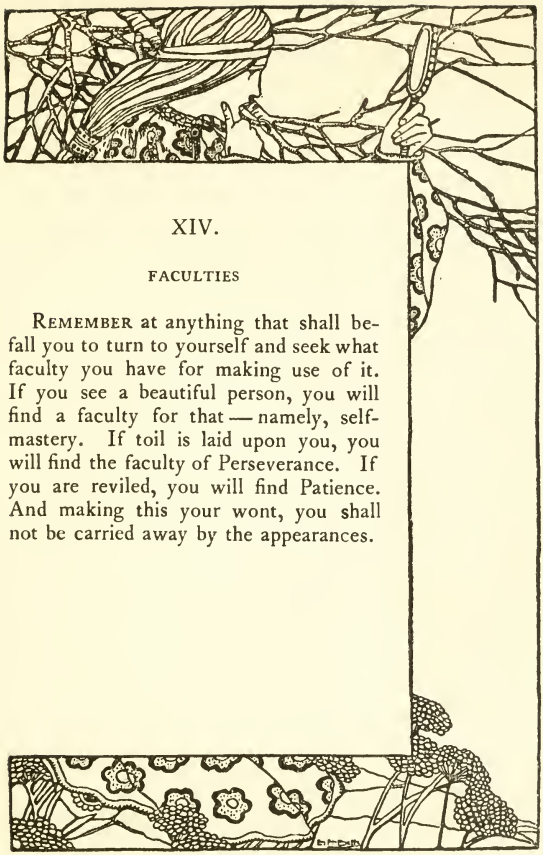


Eurystheus, and not Heracles. And how many companions and friends had he in his journeying about the world? But nothing was dearer to him than God; and for this he was believed to be the son of God, yea, and was the son of God. And trusting in God, he went about purging away lawlessness and wrong. But you are no Heracles, and can not purge away evils not your own? nor yet Theseus, who cleared Attica of evil things?

Then clear away your own. From your breast, from your mind cast out, instead of Procrustes and Sciron, grief, fear, covetousness, envy, malice, avarice, effeminacy, profligacy. And these things can not otherwise be cast out than by looking to God only, being affected only by him, and consecrated to his commands. But choosing anything else than this, you will follow with groaning and lamentation whatever is stronger than you,



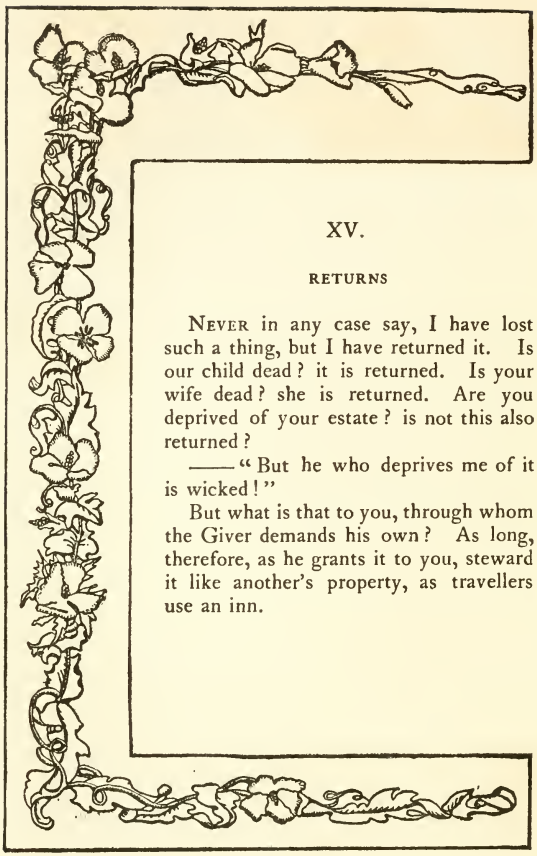
ever seeking prosperity in things outside yourself, and never able to attain it. For you seek it where it is not, and neglect to seek it where it is.



XIV.

FACULTIES

REMEMBER at anything that shall befall you to turn to yourself and seek what faculty you have for making use of it. If you see a beautiful person, you will find a faculty for that — namely, self-mastery. If toil is laid upon you, you will find the faculty of Perseverance. If you are reviled, you will find Patience. And making this your wont, you shall not be carried away by the appearances.



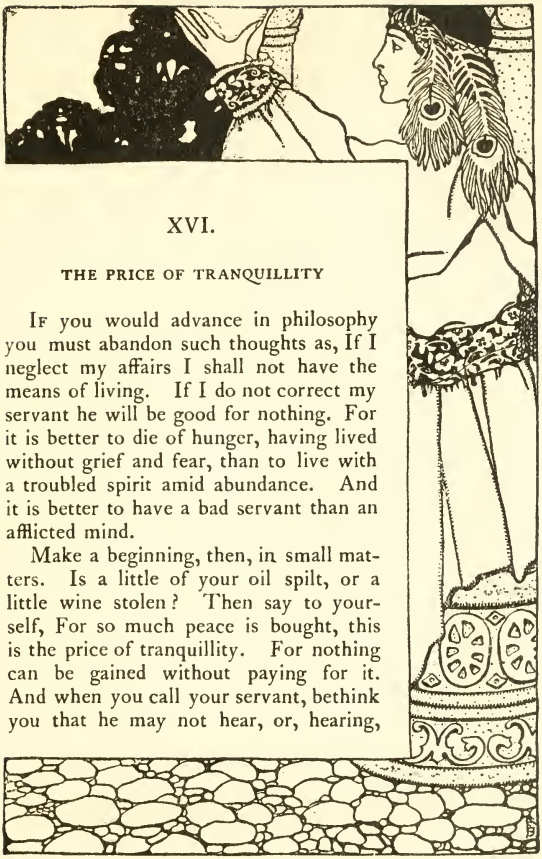
XV.

RETURNS

Never in any case say, I have lost such a thing, but I have returned it. Is our child dead? it is returned. Is your wife dead? she is returned. Are you deprived of your estate? is not this also returned?

——"But he who deprives me of it is wicked!"

But what is that to you, through whom the Giver demands his own? As long, therefore, as he grants it to you, steward it like another's property, as travellers use an inn.

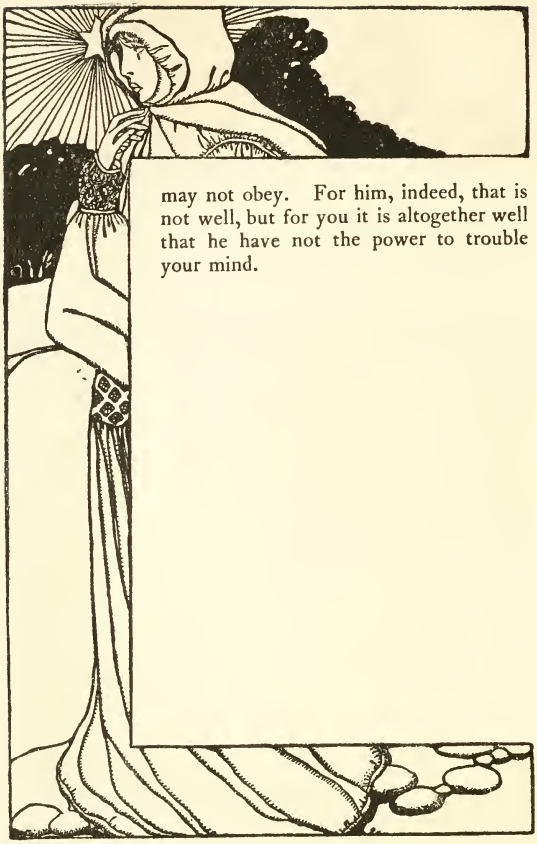


XVI.

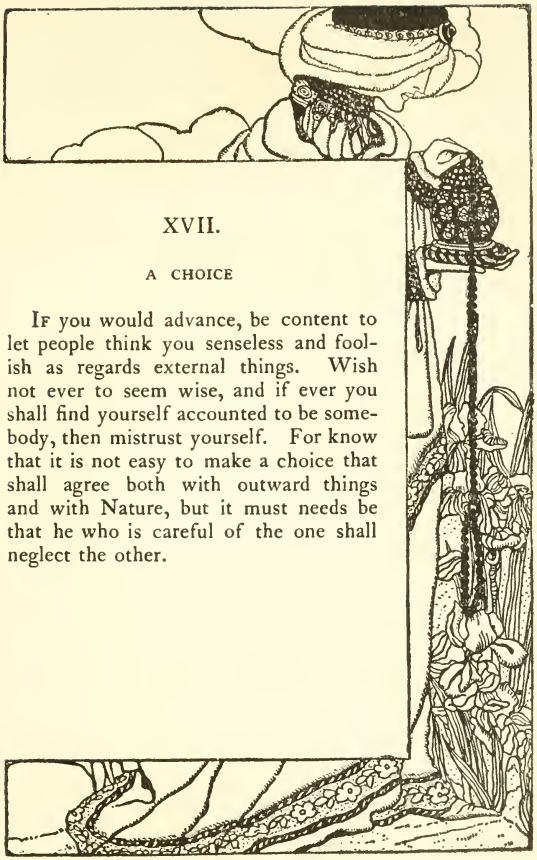
THE PRICE OF TRANQUILLITY

If you would advance in philosophy you must abandon such thoughts as, If I neglect my affairs I shall not have the means of living. If I do not correct my servant he will be good for nothing. For it is better to die of hunger, having lived without grief and fear, than to live with a troubled spirit amid abundance. And it is better to have a bad servant than an afflicted mind.

Make a beginning, then, in small matters. Is a little of your oil spilt, or a little wine stolen? Then say to yourself, For so much peace is bought, this is the price of tranquillity. For nothing can be gained without paying for it. And when you call your servant, bethink you that he may not hear, or, hearing,



may not obey. For him, indeed, that is not well, but for you it is altogether well that he have not the power to trouble your mind.



XVII.

A CHOICE

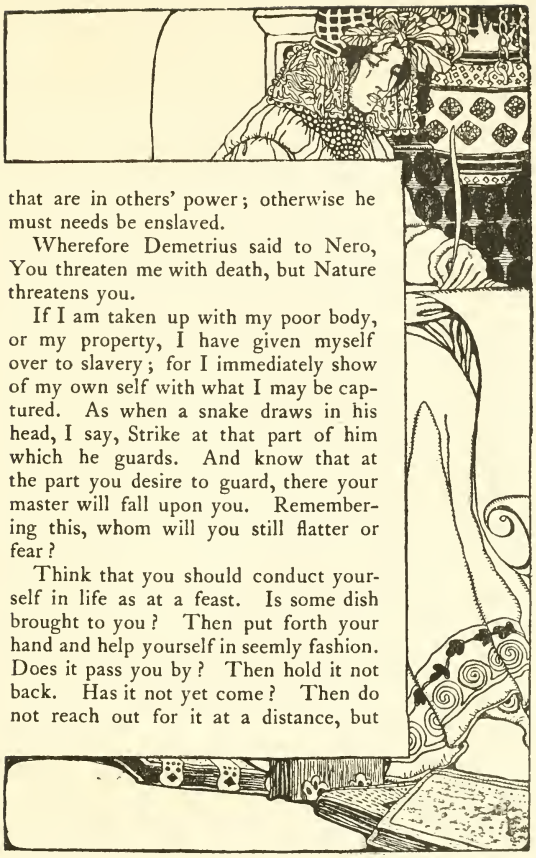
If you would advance, be content to let people think you senseless and foolish as regards external things. Wish not ever to seem wise, and if ever you shall find yourself accounted to be somebody, then mistrust yourself. For know that it is not easy to make a choice that shall agree both with outward things and with Nature, but it must needs be that he who is careful of the one shall neglect the other.

XVIII.

WHERE THE HEART IS THE BOND IS

You are a fool if you desire wife and children and friends to live forever, for that is desiring things to be in your power which are not in your power, and things pertaining to others to be your own. So also you are a fool to desire that your servant should never do anything amiss, for that is desiring evil not to be evil, but something else. But if you desire never to fail in any pursuit, this you can do. This, therefore, practise to attain — namely, the attainable.

The lord of each of us is he that has power over the things that we desire or dislike, to give or to take them away. Whoever, then, will be free, let him neither desire nor shun any of the things

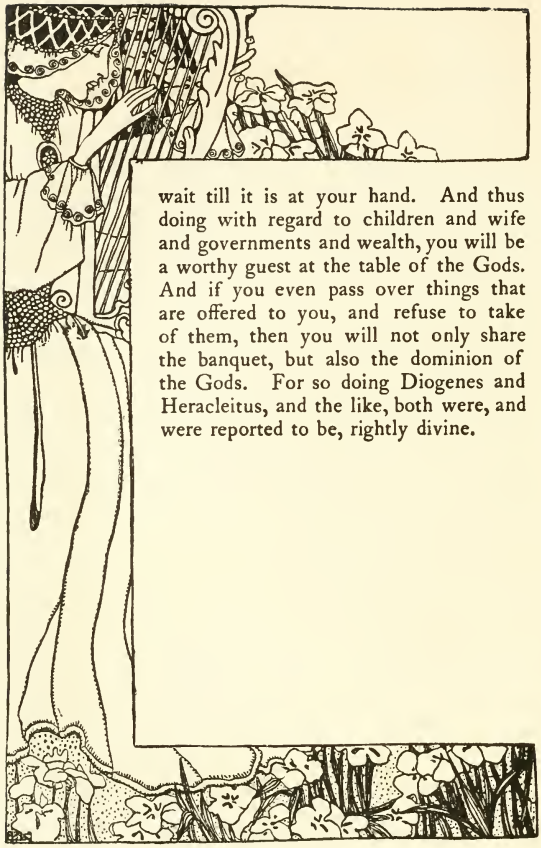


that are in others' power; otherwise he must needs be enslaved.

Wherefore Demetrius said to Nero, You threaten me with death, but Nature threatens you.

If I am taken up with my poor body, or my property, I have given myself over to slavery; for I immediately show of my own self with what I may be captured. As when a snake draws in his head, I say, Strike at that part of him which he guards. And know that at the part you desire to guard, there your master will fall upon you. Remembering this, whom will you still flatter or fear?

Think that you should conduct yourself in life as at a feast. Is some dish brought to you? Then put forth your hand and help yourself in seemly fashion. Does it pass you by? Then hold it not back. Has it not yet come? Then do not reach out for it at a distance, but



wait till it is at your hand. And thus doing with regard to children and wife and governments and wealth, you will be a worthy guest at the table of the Gods. And if you even pass over things that are offered to you, and refuse to take of them, then you will not only share the banquet, but also the dominion of the Gods. For so doing Diogenes and Heracleitus, and the like, both were, and were reported to be, rightly divine.

XIX.

WE LAMENT NOT FROM WITHIN

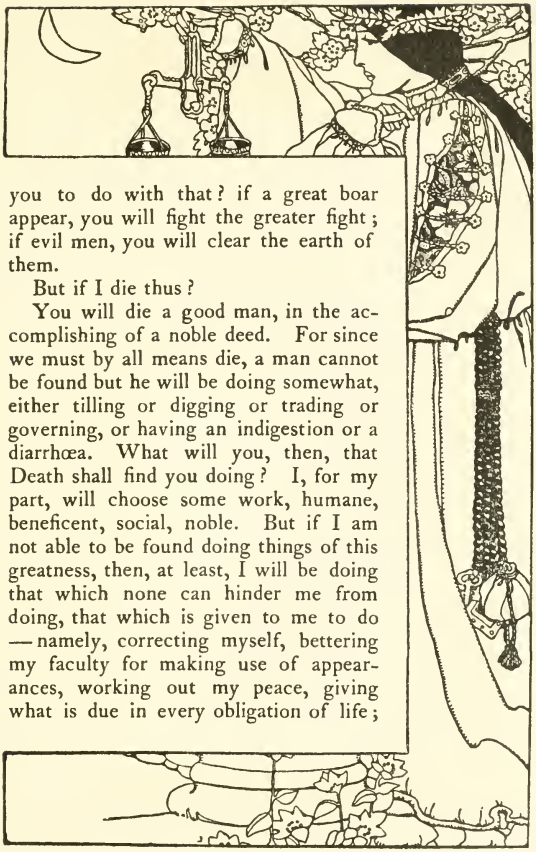
When you see one lamenting in grief because his son is gone abroad, or because he has lost his goods, look to it that you be not carried away by the appearance to think that he has truly fallen into misfortune, in outward things. But be the thought at hand, It is not the thing itself that afflicts this man — since there are others whom it afflicts not — but the opinion he has about it. And as far as speech is concerned, be not slow to fit yourself to his mood, and even if so it be to lament with him. But have a care that you lament not also from within.

XX.

A MAN MAY ACT HIS PART BUT NOT CHOOSE IT

REMEMBER that you are an actor in a play, of such a part as it may please the director to assign you; of a short part if he choose a short part; of a long one if he choose a long. And if he will have you take the part of a poor man or of a cripple, or a governor, or a private person, may you act that part with grace! For it is yours to act well the allotted part, but to choose it is another's.

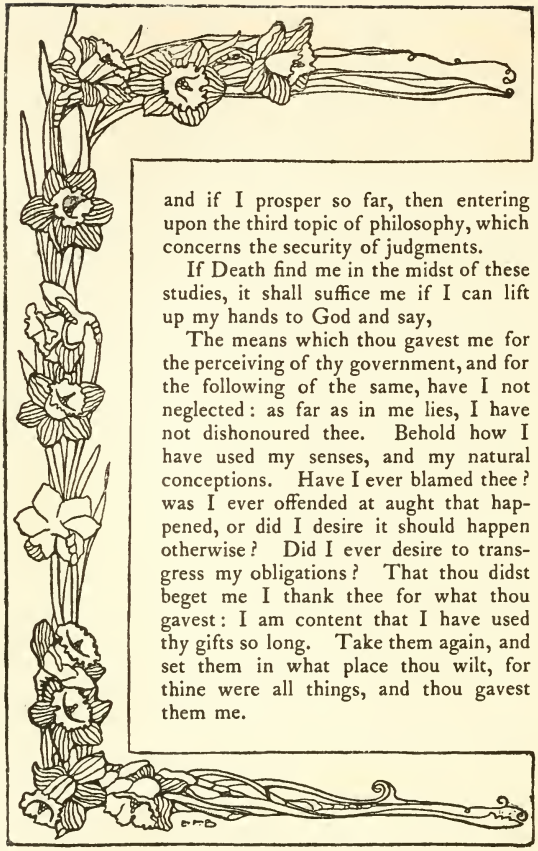
Say no more then How will it be with me? for however it be you will settle it well, and the issue shall be fortunate. What would Heracles have been had he said, How shall I contrive that a great lion may not appear to me, or a great boar, or a savage man? And what have



you to do with that? if a great boar appear, you will fight the greater fight; if evil men, you will clear the earth of them.

But if I die thus?

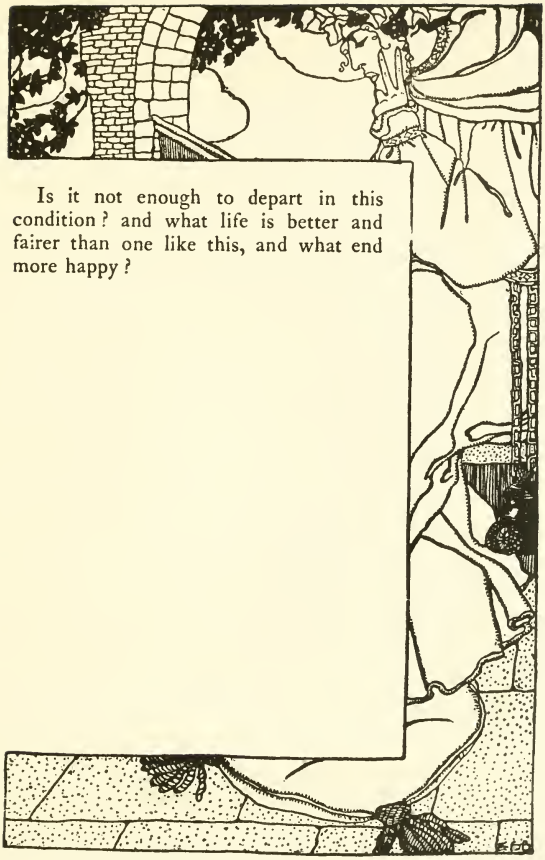
You will die a good man, in the accomplishing of a noble deed. For since we must by all means die, a man cannot be found but he will be doing somewhat, either tilling or digging or trading or governing, or having an indigestion or a diarrhœa. What will you, then, that Death shall find you doing? I, for my part, will choose some work, humane, beneficent, social, noble. But if I am not able to be found doing things of this greatness, then, at least, I will be doing that which none can hinder me from doing, that which is given to me to do — namely, correcting myself, bettering my faculty for making use of appearances, working out my peace, giving what is due in every obligation of life;



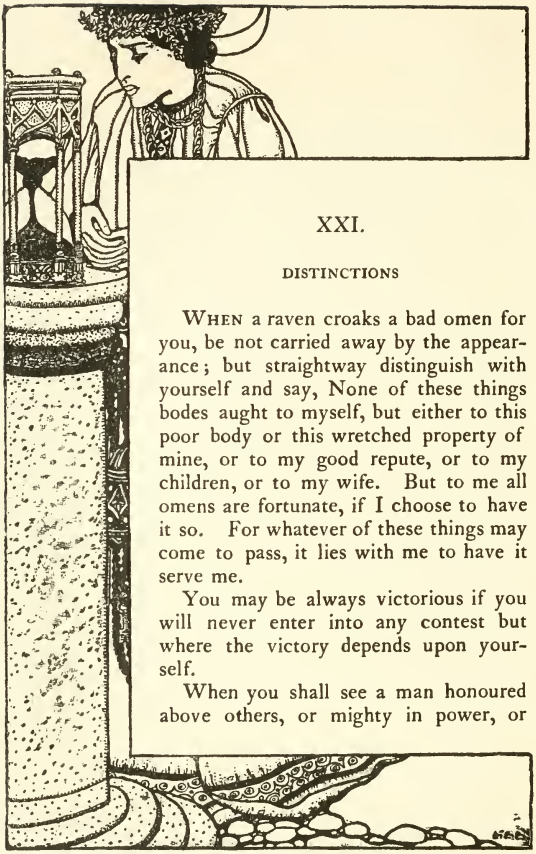
and if I prosper so far, then entering upon the third topic of philosophy, which concerns the security of judgments.

If Death find me in the midst of these studies, it shall suffice me if I can lift up my hands to God and say,

The means which thou gavest me for the perceiving of thy government, and for the following of the same, have I not neglected: as far as in me lies, I have not dishonoured thee. Behold how I have used my senses, and my natural conceptions. Have I ever blamed thee? was I ever offended at aught that happened, or did I desire it should happen otherwise? Did I ever desire to transgress my obligations? That thou didst beget me I thank thee for what thou gavest: I am content that I have used thy gifts so long. Take them again, and set them in what place thou wilt, for thine were all things, and thou gavest them me.



Is it not enough to depart in this condition? and what life is better and fairer than one like this, and what end more happy?



XXI.

DISTINCTIONS

When a raven croaks a bad omen for you, be not carried away by the appearance; but straightway distinguish with yourself and say, None of these things bodes aught to myself, but either to this poor body or this wretched property of mine, or to my good repute, or to my children, or to my wife. But to me all omens are fortunate, if I choose to have it so. For whatever of these things may come to pass, it lies with me to have it serve me.

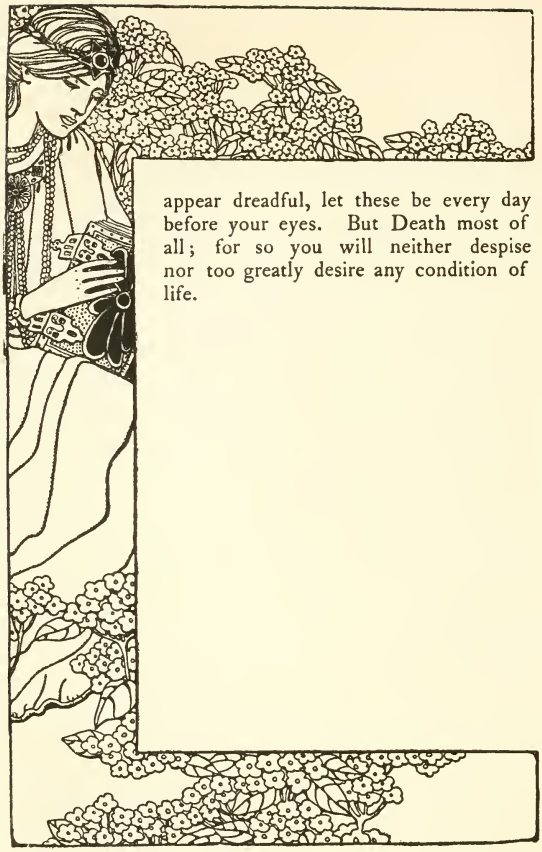
You may be always victorious if you will never enter into any contest but where the victory depends upon yourself.

When you shall see a man honoured above others, or mighty in power, or

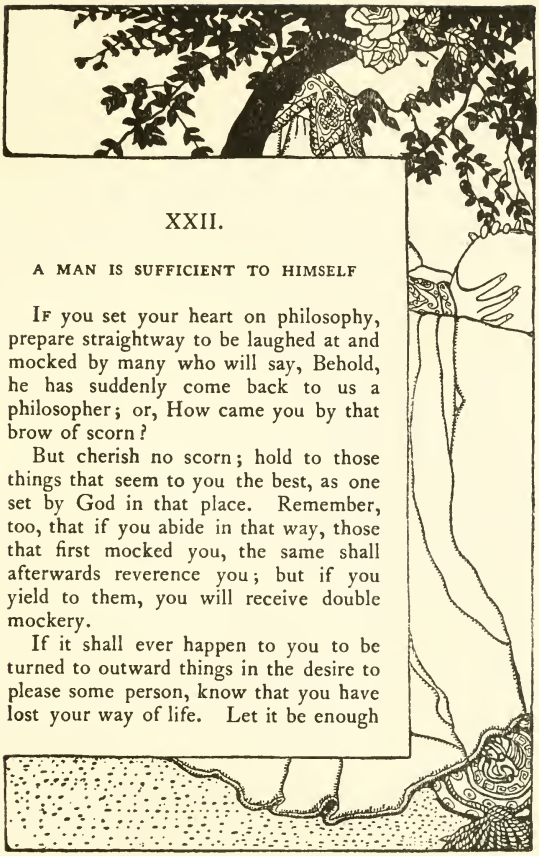
otherwise esteemed, look to it that you deem him not blessed, being carried away by the appearance. For if the essence of the Good be in those things that are in our own power, then neither envy nor jealousy have any place, nor you yourself shall not desire to be commander or prince or consul, but to be free. And to this there is one road — scorn of the things that are not in our own power.

Remember: not he that strikes or he that reviles does any man an injury, but the opinion about these things, that they are injurious. When, then, someone may provoke you to wrath, know that it is your own conception which has provoked you. Strive, therefore, at the outset not to be carried away by the appearance; for if you once gain time and delay, you will more easily master yourself.

Death and exile, and all things that



appear dreadful, let these be every day before your eyes. But Death most of all; for so you will neither despise nor too greatly desire any condition of life.



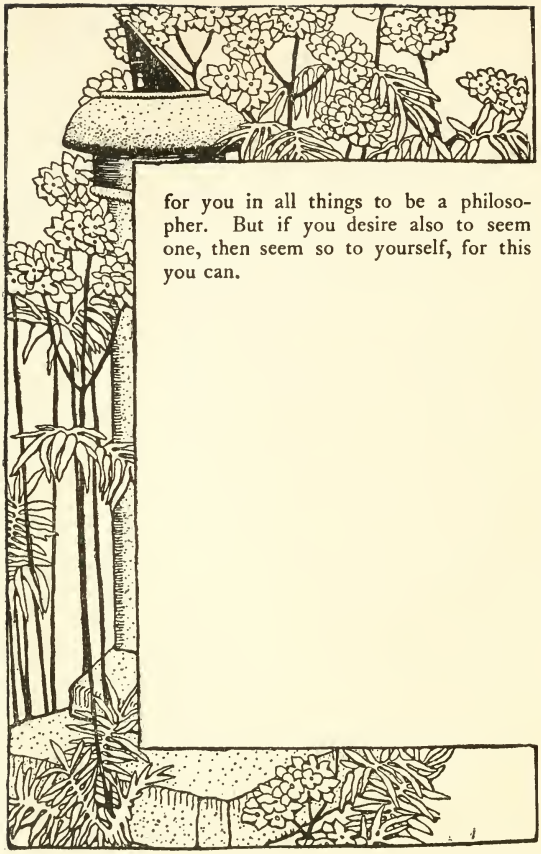
XXII.

A MAN IS SUFFICIENT TO HIMSELF

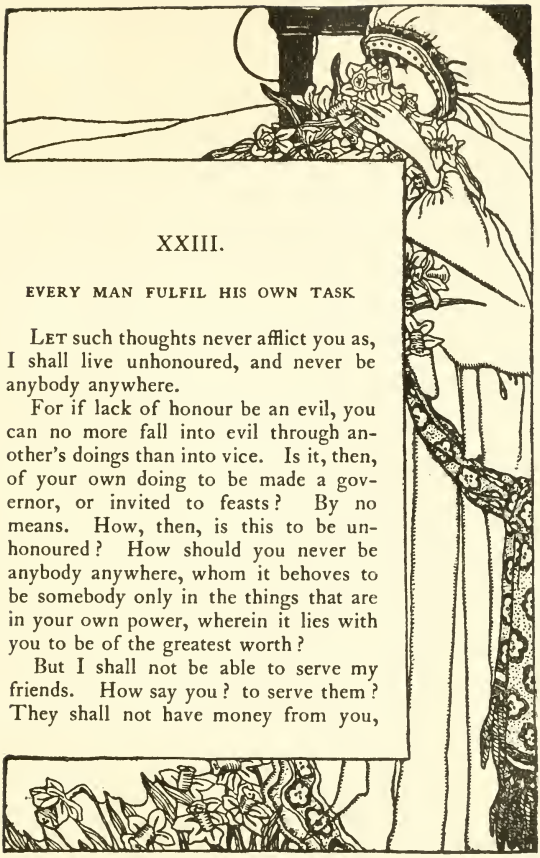
If you set your heart on philosophy, prepare straightway to be laughed at and mocked by many who will say, Behold, he has suddenly come back to us a philosopher; or, How came you by that brow of scorn?

But cherish no scorn; hold to those things that seem to you the best, as one set by God in that place. Remember, too, that if you abide in that way, those that first mocked you, the same shall afterwards reverence you; but if you yield to them, you will receive double mockery.

If it shall ever happen to you to be turned to outward things in the desire to please some person, know that you have lost your way of life. Let it be enough



for you in all things to be a philosopher. But if you desire also to seem one, then seem so to yourself, for this you can.



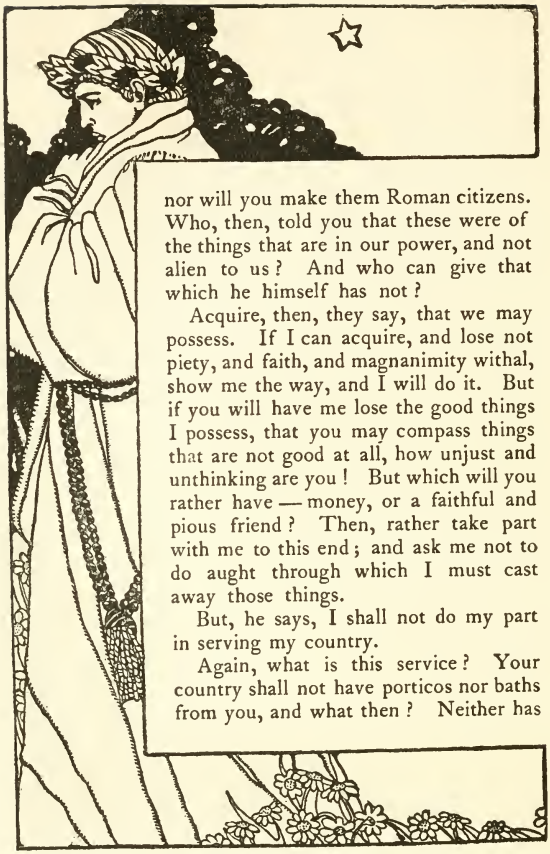
XXIII.

EVERY MAN FULFIL HIS OWN TASK

Let such thoughts never afflict you as, I shall live unhonoured, and never be anybody anywhere.

For if lack of honour be an evil, you can no more fall into evil through another's doings than into vice. Is it, then, of your own doing to be made a governor, or invited to feasts? By no means. How, then, is this to be unhonoured? How should you never be anybody anywhere, whom it behoves to be somebody only in the things that are in your own power, wherein it lies with you to be of the greatest worth?

But I shall not be able to serve my friends. How say you? to serve them? They shall not have money from you,

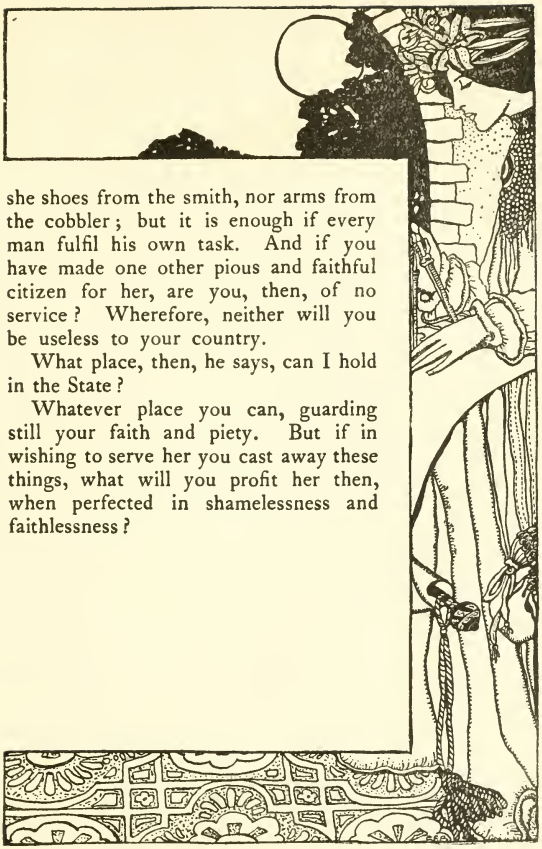


nor will you make them Roman citizens. Who, then, told you that these were of the things that are in our power, and not alien to us? And who can give that which he himself has not?

Acquire, then, they say, that we may possess. If I can acquire, and lose not piety, and faith, and magnanimity withal, show me the way, and I will do it. But if you will have me lose the good things I possess, that you may compass things that are not good at all, how unjust and unthinking are you! But which will you rather have — money, or a faithful and pious friend? Then, rather take part with me to this end; and ask me not to do aught through which I must cast away those things.

But, he says, I shall not do my part in serving my country.

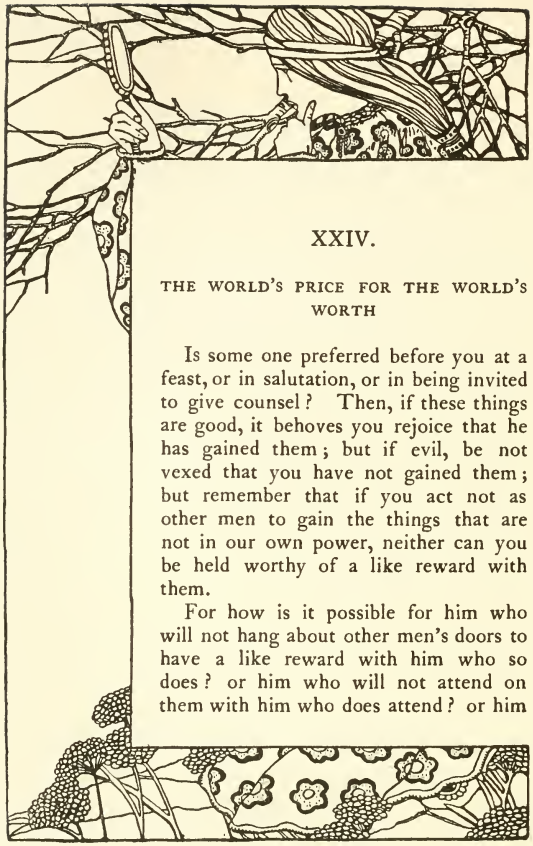
Again, what is this service? Your country shall not have porticos nor baths from you, and what then? Neither has



she shoes from the smith, nor arms from the cobbler; but it is enough if every man fulfil his own task. And if you have made one other pious and faithful citizen for her, are you, then, of no service? Wherefore, neither will you be useless to your country.

What place, then, he says, can I hold in the State?

Whatever place you can, guarding still your faith and piety. But if in wishing to serve her you cast away these things, what will you profit her then, when perfected in shamelessness and faithlessness?



XXIV.

THE WORLD'S PRICE FOR THE WORLD'S WORTH

Is some one preferred before you at a feast, or in salutation, or in being invited to give counsel? Then, if these things are good, it behoves you rejoice that he has gained them; but if evil, be not vexed that you have not gained them; but remember that if you act not as other men to gain the things that are not in our own power, neither can you be held worthy of a like reward with them.

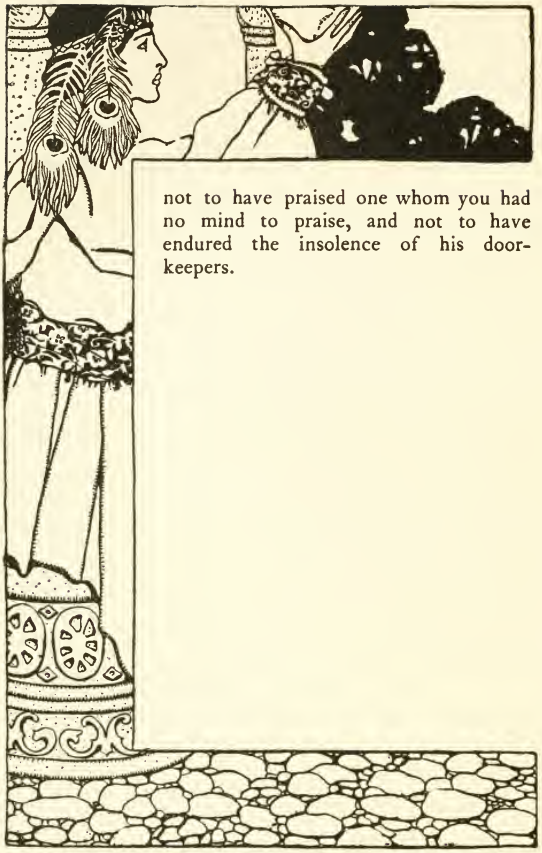
For how is it possible for him who will not hang about other men's doors to have a like reward with him who so does? or him who will not attend on them with him who does attend? or him

who will not flatter them with the flatterer? You are unjust, then, and insatiable, if you desire to gain those things for nothing, without paying the price for which they are sold.

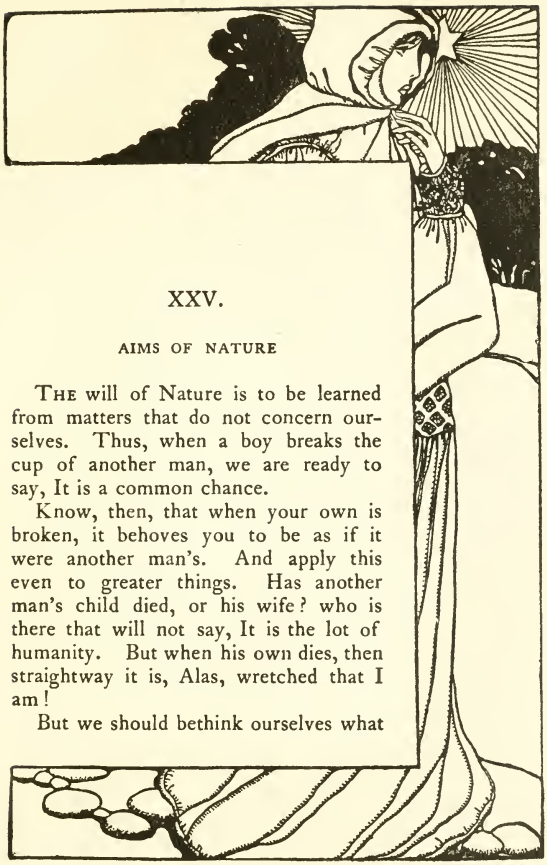
But how much is a lettuce sold for? A penny, perchance. If any one, then, will spend a penny, he shall have lettuce; but you, not spending, shall not have. But think not you are worse off than he; for as he has the lettuce, so you the penny which you would not give.

And likewise in this matter. You are not invited to some man's feast? That is, for you gave not to the host the price of the supper; and it is sold for flattery, it is sold for attendance. Pay, then, the price, if it will profit you, for which the thing is sold. But if you will not give the price, and will have the thing, you are greedy and infatuated.

Will you have nothing, then, instead of the supper? You shall have this —



not to have praised one whom you had no mind to praise, and not to have endured the insolence of his door-keepers.



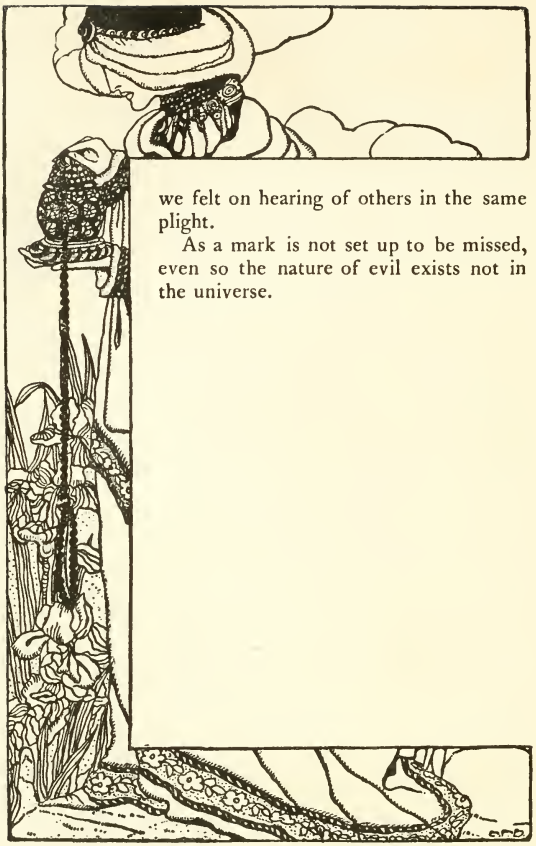
XXV.

AIMS OF NATURE

THE will of Nature is to be learned from matters that do not concern ourselves. Thus, when a boy breaks the cup of another man, we are ready to say, It is a common chance.

Know, then, that when your own is broken, it behoves you to be as if it were another man's. And apply this even to greater things. Has another man's child died, or his wife? who is there that will not say, It is the lot of humanity. But when his own dies, then straightway it is, Alas, wretched that I am!

But we should bethink ourselves what



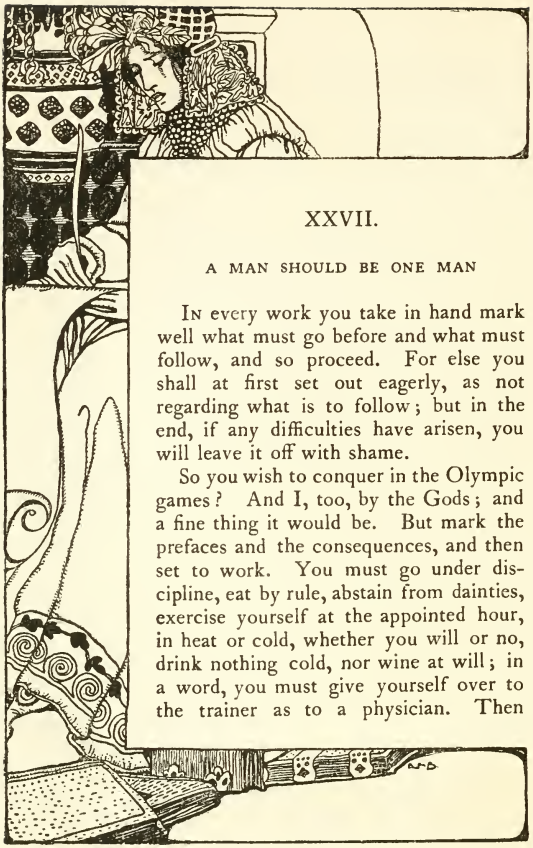
we felt on hearing of others in the same plight.

As a mark is not set up to be missed, even so the nature of evil exists not in the universe.

XXVI.

THE MIND'S SECURITY

If anyone should set your body at the mercy of every passer-by, you would be indignant. When, therefore, you set your own mind at the mercy of every chance, to be troubled and perturbed when anyone may revile you, have you no shame of this?

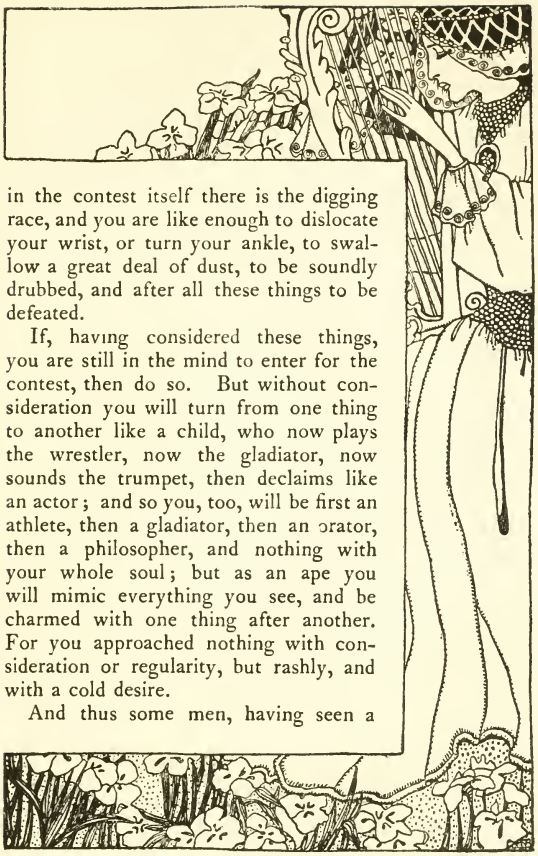


XXVII.

A MAN SHOULD BE ONE MAN

In every work you take in hand mark well what must go before and what must follow, and so proceed. For else you shall at first set out eagerly, as not regarding what is to follow; but in the end, if any difficulties have arisen, you will leave it off with shame.

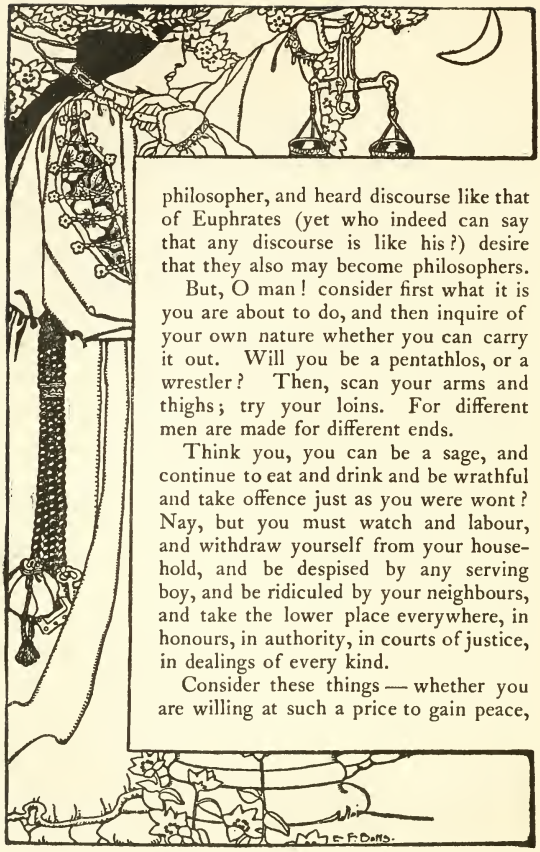
So you wish to conquer in the Olympic games? And I, too, by the Gods; and a fine thing it would be. But mark the prefaces and the consequences, and then set to work. You must go under discipline, eat by rule, abstain from dainties, exercise yourself at the appointed hour, in heat or cold, whether you will or no, drink nothing cold, nor wine at will; in a word, you must give yourself over to the trainer as to a physician. Then



in the contest itself there is the digging race, and you are like enough to dislocate your wrist, or turn your ankle, to swallow a great deal of dust, to be soundly drubbed, and after all these things to be defeated.

If, having considered these things, you are still in the mind to enter for the contest, then do so. But without consideration you will turn from one thing to another like a child, who now plays the wrestler, now the gladiator, now sounds the trumpet, then declaims like an actor; and so you, too, will be first an athlete, then a gladiator, then an orator, then a philosopher, and nothing with your whole soul; but as an ape you will mimic everything you see, and be charmed with one thing after another. For you approached nothing with consideration or regularity, but rashly, and with a cold desire.

And thus some men, having seen a

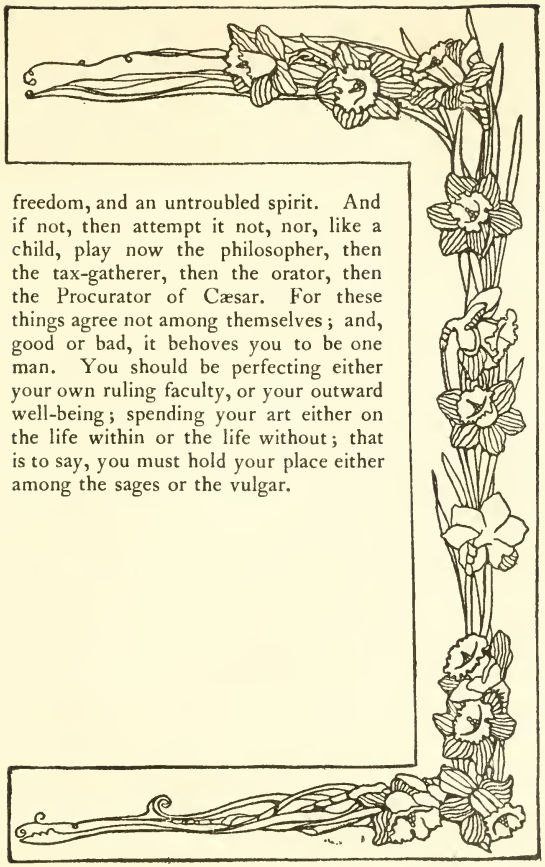


philosopher, and heard discourse like that of Euphrates (yet who indeed can say that any discourse is like his?) desire that they also may become philosophers.

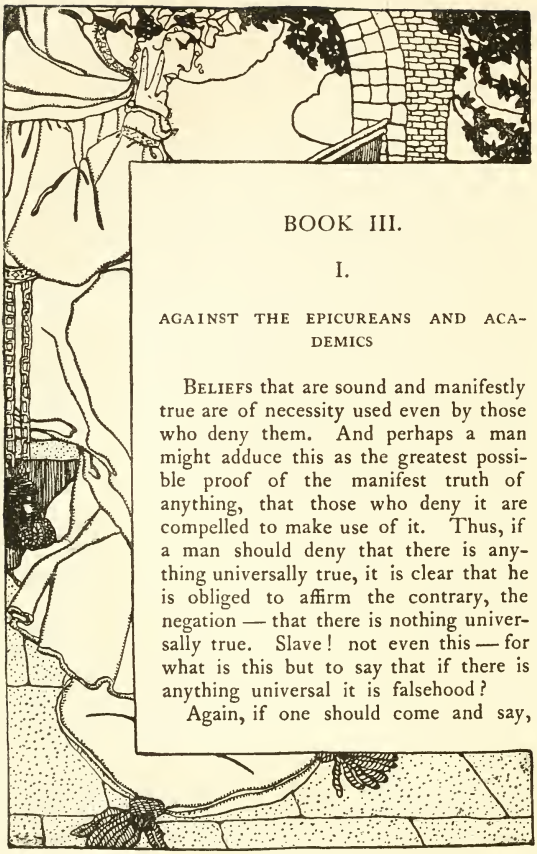
But, O man! consider first what it is you are about to do, and then inquire of your own nature whether you can carry it out. Will you be a pentathlos, or a wrestler? Then, scan your arms and thighs; try your loins. For different men are made for different ends.

Think you, you can be a sage, and continue to eat and drink and be wrathful and take offence just as you were wont? Nay, but you must watch and labour, and withdraw yourself from your household, and be despised by any serving boy, and be ridiculed by your neighbours, and take the lower place everywhere, in honours, in authority, in courts of justice, in dealings of every kind.

Consider these things — whether you are willing at such a price to gain peace,



freedom, and an untroubled spirit. And if not, then attempt it not, nor, like a child, play now the philosopher, then the tax-gatherer, then the orator, then the Procurator of Cæsar. For these things agree not among themselves; and, good or bad, it behoves you to be one man. You should be perfecting either your own ruling faculty, or your outward well-being; spending your art either on the life within or the life without; that is to say, you must hold your place either among the sages or the vulgar.



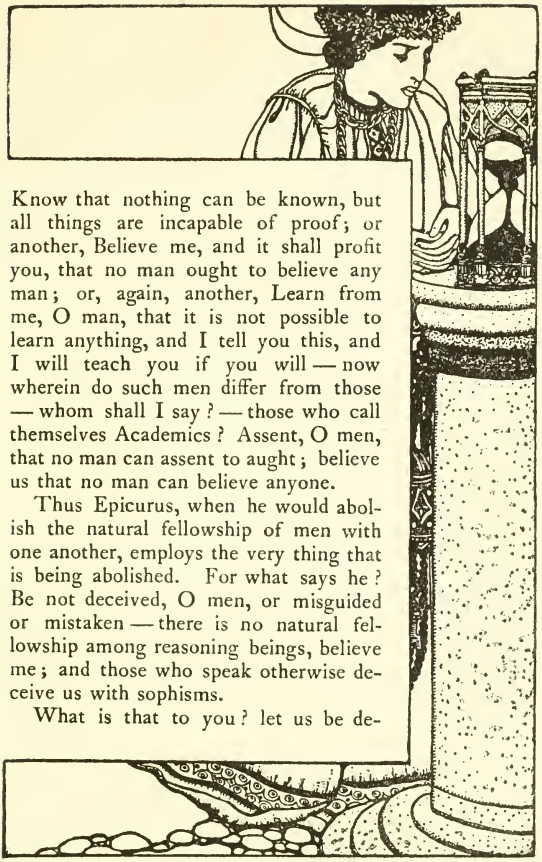
BOOK III.

I.

AGAINST THE EPICUREANS AND ACADEMICS

Beliefs that are sound and manifestly true are of necessity used even by those who deny them. And perhaps a man might adduce this as the greatest possible proof of the manifest truth of anything, that those who deny it are compelled to make use of it. Thus, if a man should deny that there is anything universally true, it is clear that he is obliged to affirm the contrary, the negation — that there is nothing universally true. Slave! not even this — for what is this but to say that if there is anything universal it is falsehood?

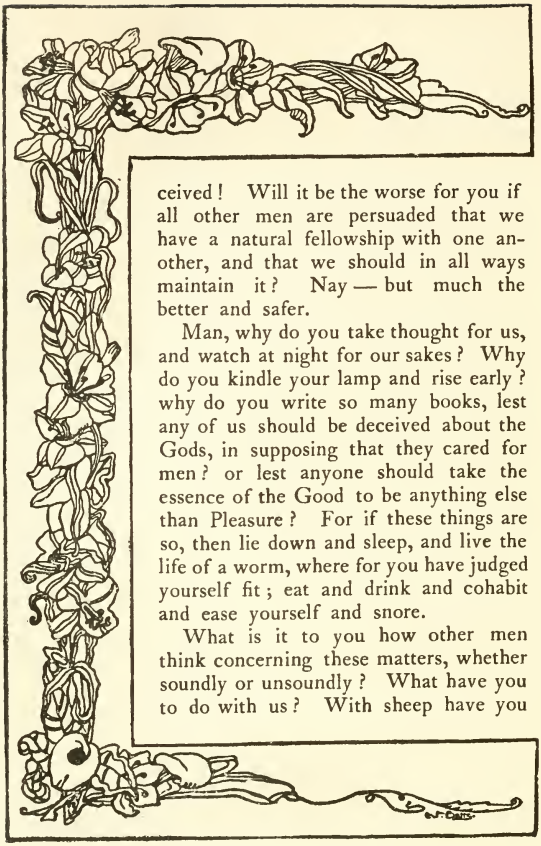
Again, if one should come and say,



Know that nothing can be known, but all things are incapable of proof; or another, Believe me, and it shall profit you, that no man ought to believe any man; or, again, another, Learn from me, O man, that it is not possible to learn anything, and I tell you this, and I will teach you if you will — now wherein do such men differ from those — whom shall I say? — those who call themselves Academics? Assent, O men, that no man can assent to aught; believe us that no man can believe anyone.

Thus Epicurus, when he would abolish the natural fellowship of men with one another, employs the very thing that is being abolished. For what says he? Be not deceived, O men, or misguided or mistaken — there is no natural fellowship among reasoning beings, believe me; and those who speak otherwise deceive us with sophisms.

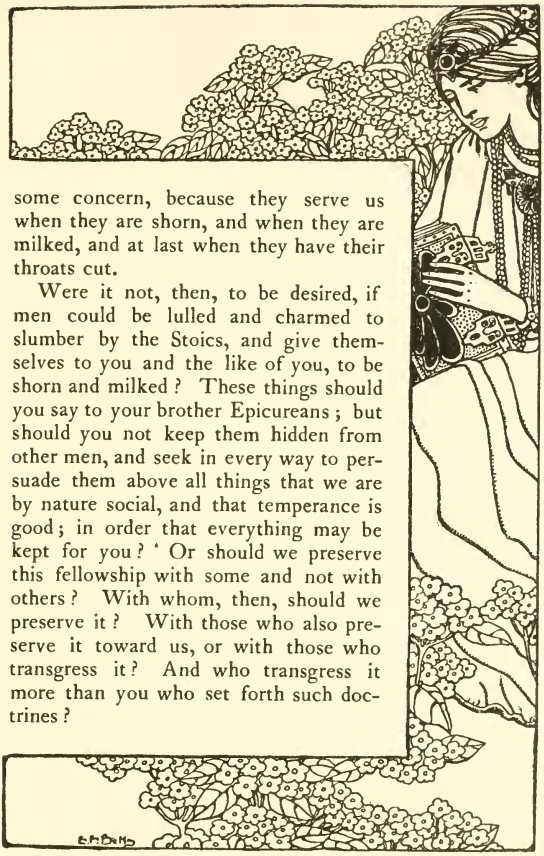
What is that to you? let us be de-



ceived! Will it be the worse for you if all other men are persuaded that we have a natural fellowship with one another, and that we should in all ways maintain it? Nay — but much the better and safer.

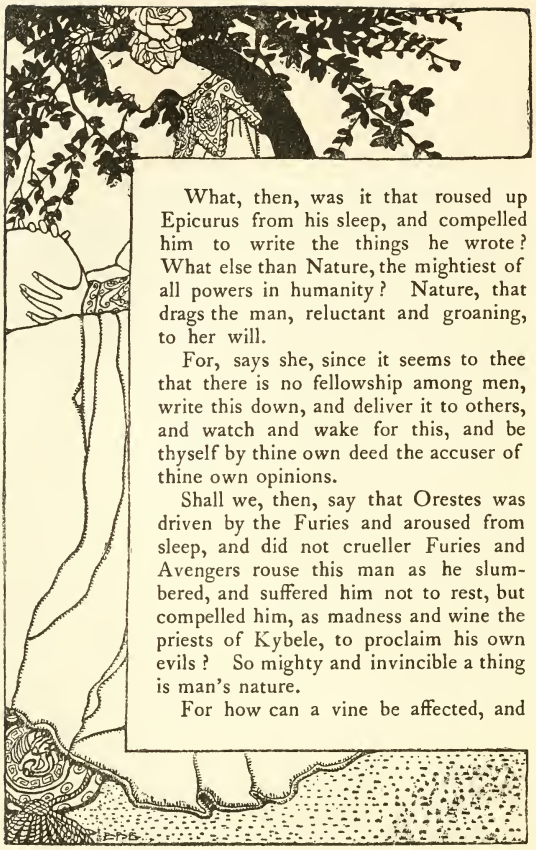
Man, why do you take thought for us, and watch at night for our sakes? Why do you kindle your lamp and rise early? why do you write so many books, lest any of us should be deceived about the Gods, in supposing that they cared for men? or lest anyone should take the essence of the Good to be anything else than Pleasure? For if these things are so, then lie down and sleep, and live the life of a worm, where for you have judged yourself fit; eat and drink and cohabit and ease yourself and snore.

What is it to you how other men think concerning these matters, whether soundly or unsoundly? What have you to do with us? With sheep have you



some concern, because they serve us when they are shorn, and when they are milked, and at last when they have their throats cut.

Were it not, then, to be desired, if men could be lulled and charmed to slumber by the Stoics, and give themselves to you and the like of you, to be shorn and milked? These things should you say to your brother Epicureans; but should you not keep them hidden from other men, and seek in every way to persuade them above all things that we are by nature social, and that temperance is good; in order that everything may be kept for you? ' Or should we preserve this fellowship with some and not with others? With whom, then, should we preserve it? With those who also preserve it toward us, or with those who transgress it? And who transgress it more than you who set forth such doctrines?

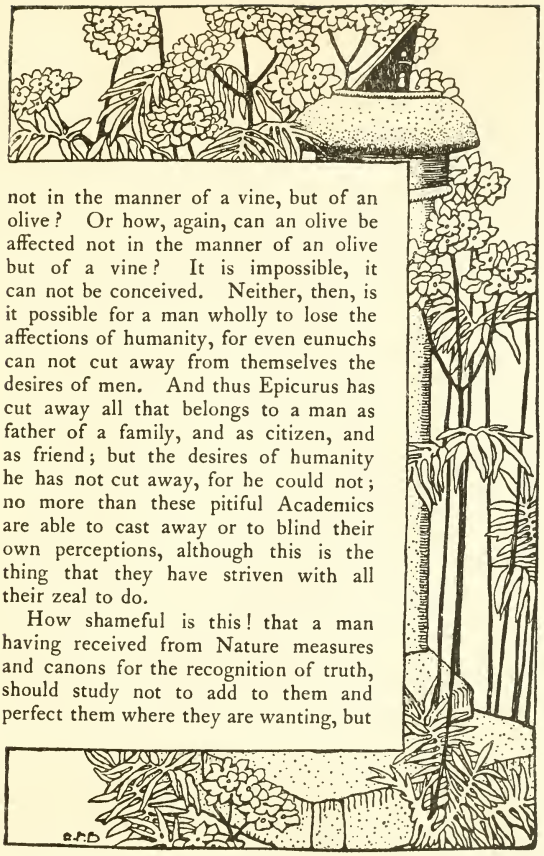


What, then, was it that roused up Epicurus from his sleep, and compelled him to write the things he wrote? What else than Nature, the mightiest of all powers in humanity? Nature, that drags the man, reluctant and groaning, to her will.

For, says she, since it seems to thee that there is no fellowship among men, write this down, and deliver it to others, and watch and wake for this, and be thyself by thine own deed the accuser of thine own opinions.

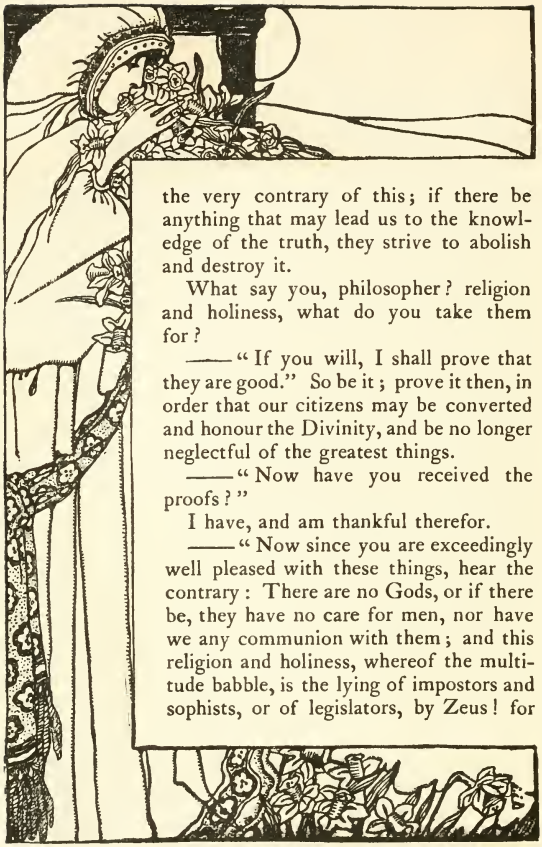
Shall we, then, say that Orestes was driven by the Furies and aroused from sleep, and did not crueller Furies and Avengers rouse this man as he slumbered, and suffered him not to rest, but compelled him, as madness and wine the priests of Kybele, to proclaim his own evils? So mighty and invincible a thing is man's nature.

For how can a vine be affected, and



not in the manner of a vine, but of an olive? Or how, again, can an olive be affected not in the manner of an olive but of a vine? It is impossible, it can not be conceived. Neither, then, is it possible for a man wholly to lose the affections of humanity, for even eunuchs can not cut away from themselves the desires of men. And thus Epicurus has cut away all that belongs to a man as father of a family, and as citizen, and as friend; but the desires of humanity he has not cut away, for he could not; no more than these pitiful Academics are able to cast away or to blind their own perceptions, although this is the thing that they have striven with all their zeal to do.

How shameful is this! that a man having received from Nature measures and canons for the recognition of truth, should study not to add to them and perfect them where they are wanting, but



the very contrary of this; if there be anything that may lead us to the knowledge of the truth, they strive to abolish and destroy it.

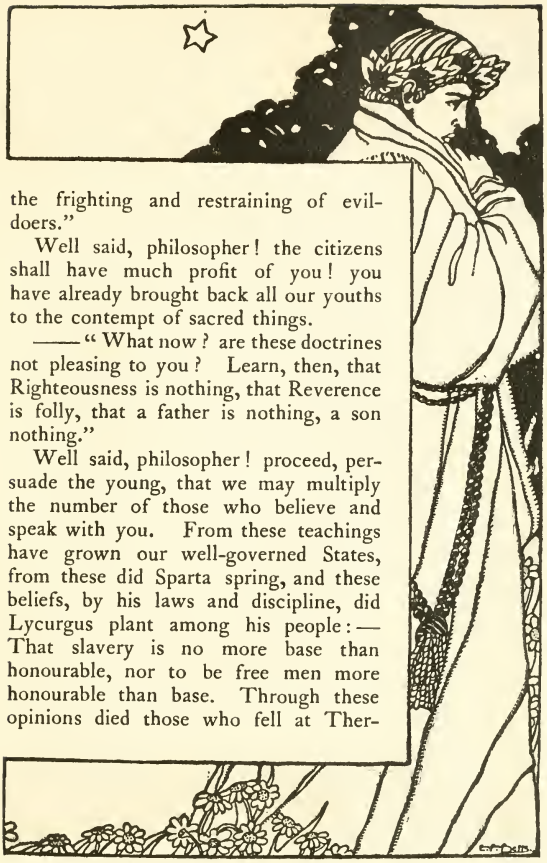
What say you, philosopher? religion and holiness, what do you take them for?

——"If you will, I shall prove that they are good." So be it; prove it then, in order that our citizens may be converted and honour the Divinity, and be no longer neglectful of the greatest things.

——"Now have you received the proofs?"

I have, and am thankful therefor.

——"Now since you are exceedingly well pleased with these things, hear the contrary: There are no Gods, or if there be, they have no care for men, nor have we any communion with them; and this religion and holiness, whereof the multitude babble, is the lying of impostors and sophists, or of legislators, by Zeus! for

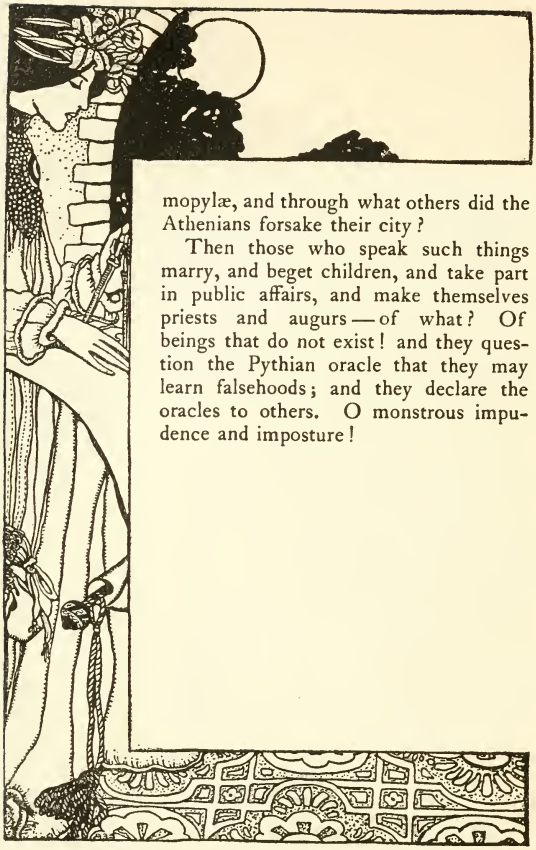


the frighting and restraining of evil-doers."

Well said, philosopher! the citizens shall have much profit of you! you have already brought back all our youths to the contempt of sacred things.

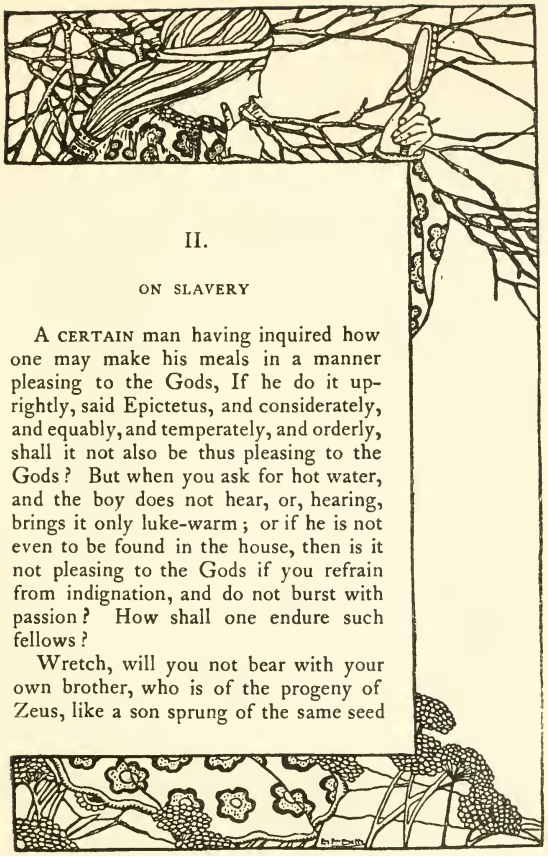
——"What now? are these doctrines not pleasing to you? Learn, then, that Righteousness is nothing, that Reverence is folly, that a father is nothing, a son nothing."

Well said, philosopher! proceed, persuade the young, that we may multiply the number of those who believe and speak with you. From these teachings have grown our well-governed States, from these did Sparta spring, and these beliefs, by his laws and discipline, did Lycurgus plant among his people:— That slavery is no more base than honourable, nor to be free men more honourable than base. Through these opinions died those who fell at Ther-



mopylæ, and through what others did the Athenians forsake their city?

Then those who speak such things marry, and beget children, and take part in public affairs, and make themselves priests and augurs — of what? Of beings that do not exist! and they question the Pythian oracle that they may learn falsehoods; and they declare the oracles to others. O monstrous impudence and imposture!



II.

ON SLAVERY

A CERTAIN man having inquired how one may make his meals in a manner pleasing to the Gods, If he do it uprightly, said Epictetus, and considerately, and equably, and temperately, and orderly, shall it not also be thus pleasing to the Gods? But when you ask for hot water, and the boy does not hear, or, hearing, brings it only luke-warm; or if he is not even to be found in the house, then is it not pleasing to the Gods if you refrain from indignation, and do not burst with passion? How shall one endure such fellows?

Wretch, will you not bear with your own brother, who is of the progeny of Zeus, like a son sprung of the same seed

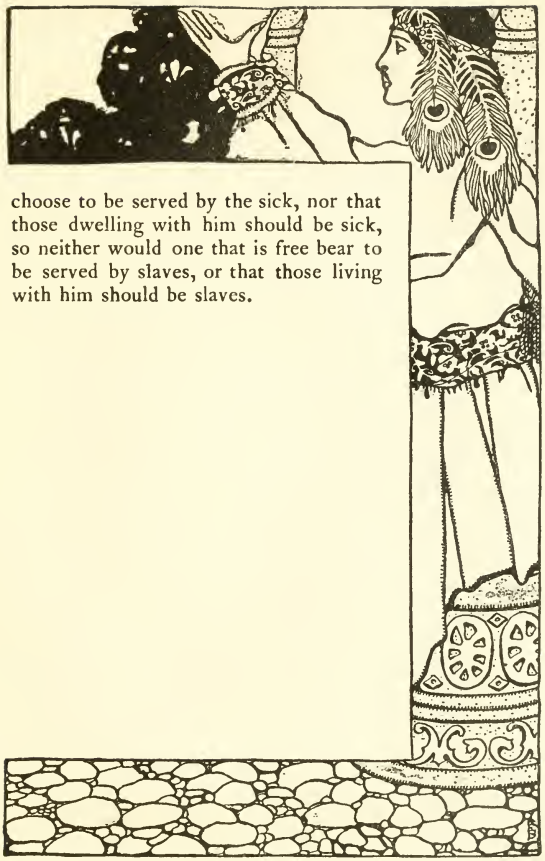
as yourself, and of the same heavenly descent, but you must straightway make yourself a tyrant, for the place of command in which you are set? Will you not remember who you are, and whom you ruled — that they are kinsmen, brethren by nature, the progeny of Zeus?

But I have bought them, and they have not bought me!

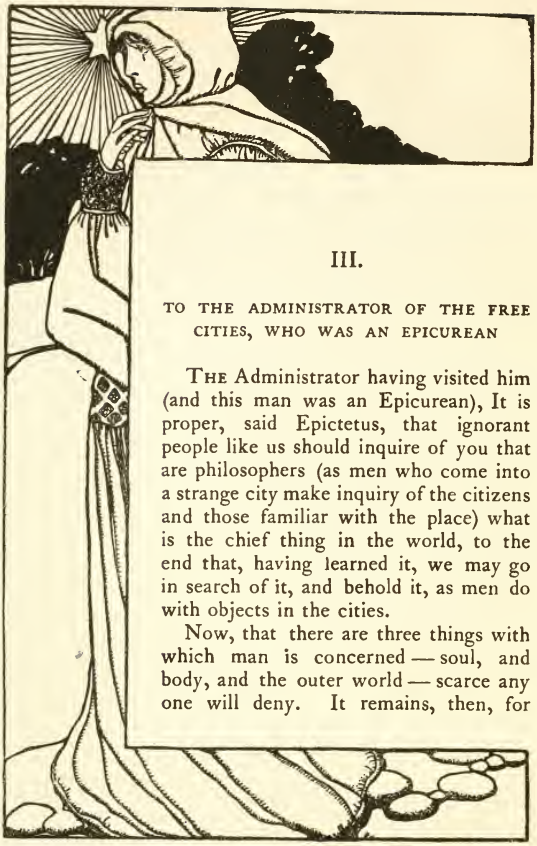
See you, then, whither you are looking — toward the earth, toward the pit of perdition, toward these miserable laws of dead men? but toward the laws of the Gods you look not.

That which you would not suffer yourself, seek not to lay upon others. You would not be a slave — look to it, that others be not slaves to you. For if you endure to have slaves, it seems that you yourself are first of all a slave. For virtue has no communion with vice nor freedom with slavery.

As one who is in health would not



choose to be served by the sick, nor that those dwelling with him should be sick, so neither would one that is free bear to be served by slaves, or that those living with him should be slaves.

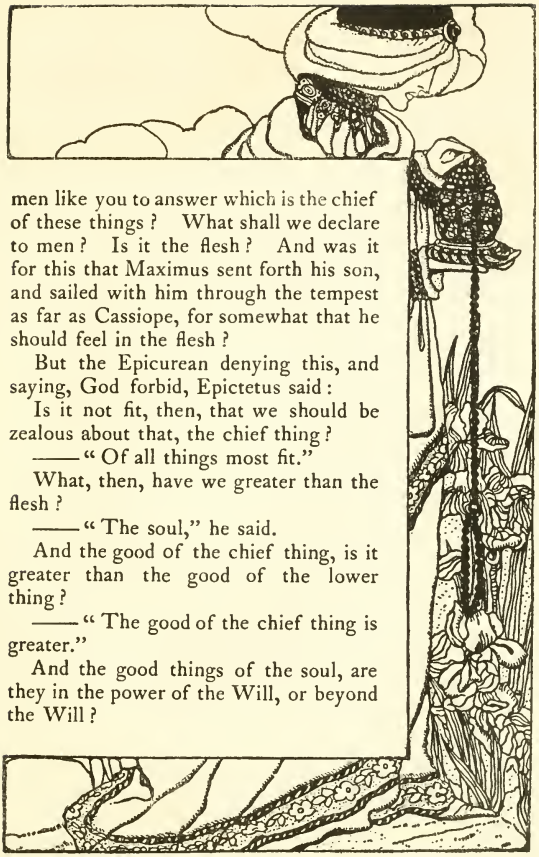


III.

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FREE CITIES, WHO WAS AN EPICUREAN

THE Administrator having visited him (and this man was an Epicurean), It is proper, said Epictetus, that ignorant people like us should inquire of you that are philosophers (as men who come into a strange city make inquiry of the citizens and those familiar with the place) what is the chief thing in the world, to the end that, having learned it, we may go in search of it, and behold it, as men do with objects in the cities.

Now, that there are three things with which man is concerned — soul, and body, and the outer world — scarce any one will deny. It remains, then, for



men like you to answer which is the chief of these things? What shall we declare to men? Is it the flesh? And was it for this that Maximus sent forth his son, and sailed with him through the tempest as far as Cassiope, for somewhat that he should feel in the flesh?

But the Epicurean denying this, and saying, God forbid, Epictetus said:

Is it not fit, then, that we should be zealous about that, the chief thing?

—— "Of all things most fit."

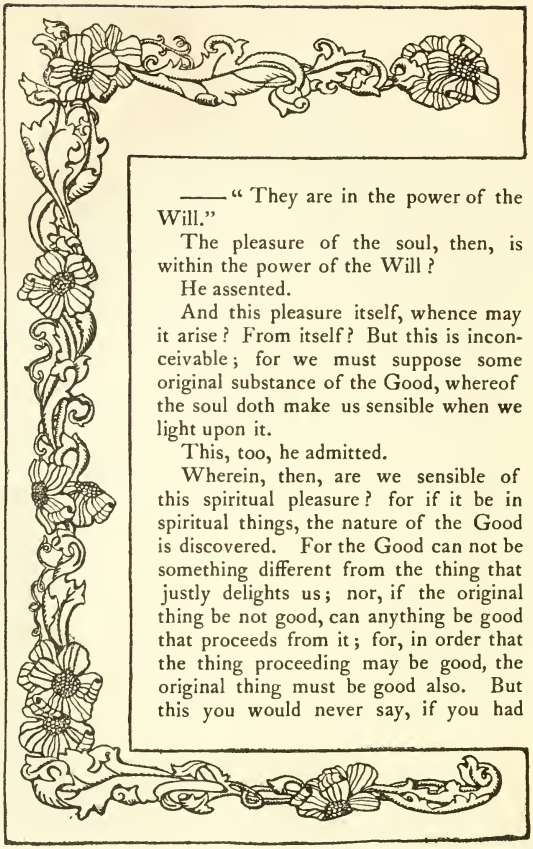
What, then, have we greater than the flesh?

—— "The soul," he said.

And the good of the chief thing, is it greater than the good of the lower thing?

—— "The good of the chief thing is greater."

And the good things of the soul, are they in the power of the Will, or beyond the Will?



—— "They are in the power of the Will."

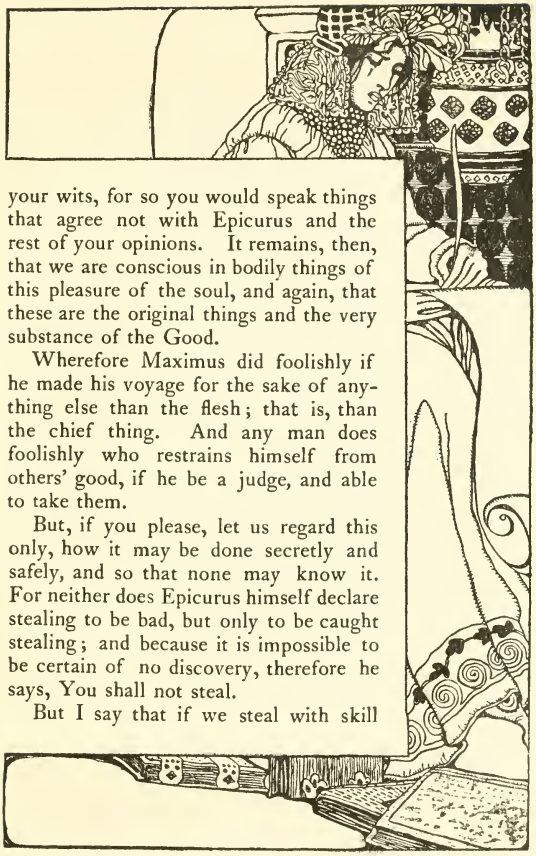
The pleasure of the soul, then, is within the power of the Will?

He assented.

And this pleasure itself, whence may it arise? From itself? But this is inconceivable; for we must suppose some original substance of the Good, whereof the soul doth make us sensible when we light upon it.

This, too, he admitted.

Wherein, then, are we sensible of this spiritual pleasure? for if it be in spiritual things, the nature of the Good is discovered. For the Good can not be something different from the thing that justly delights us; nor, if the original thing be not good, can anything be good that proceeds from it; for, in order that the thing proceeding may be good, the original thing must be good also. But this you would never say, if you had

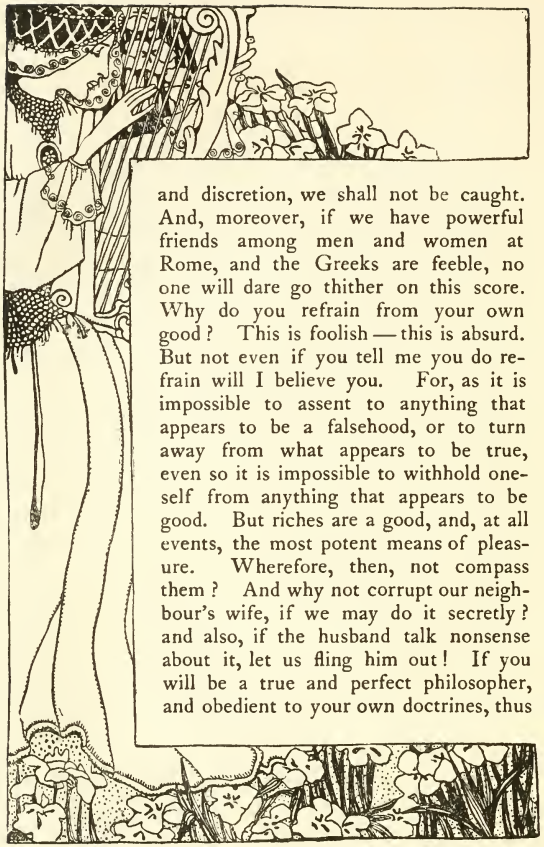


your wits, for so you would speak things that agree not with Epicurus and the rest of your opinions. It remains, then, that we are conscious in bodily things of this pleasure of the soul, and again, that these are the original things and the very substance of the Good.

Wherefore Maximus did foolishly if he made his voyage for the sake of anything else than the flesh; that is, than the chief thing. And any man does foolishly who restrains himself from others' good, if he be a judge, and able to take them.

But, if you please, let us regard this only, how it may be done secretly and safely, and so that none may know it. For neither does Epicurus himself declare stealing to be bad, but only to be caught stealing; and because it is impossible to be certain of no discovery, therefore he says, You shall not steal.

But I say that if we steal with skill



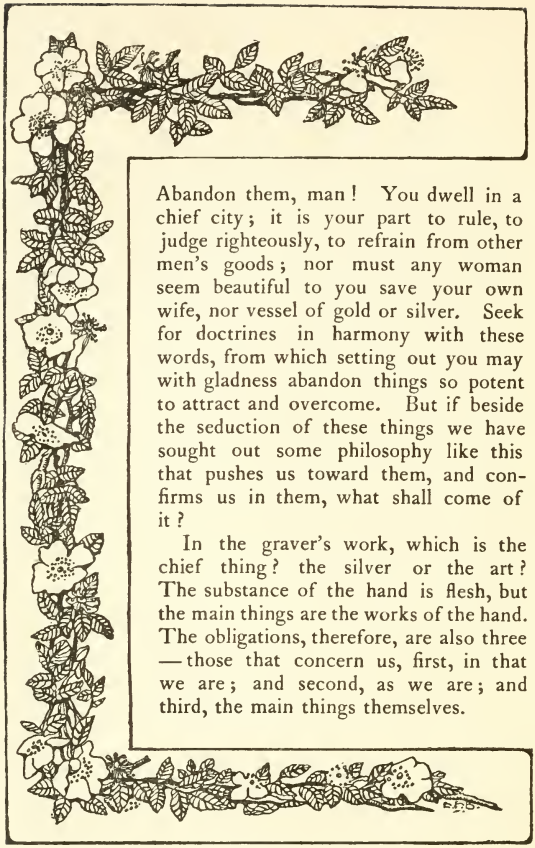
and discretion, we shall not be caught. And, moreover, if we have powerful friends among men and women at Rome, and the Greeks are feeble, no one will dare go thither on this score. Why do you refrain from your own good? This is foolish — this is absurd. But not even if you tell me you do refrain will I believe you. For, as it is impossible to assent to anything that appears to be a falsehood, or to turn away from what appears to be true, even so it is impossible to withhold oneself from anything that appears to be good. But riches are a good, and, at all events, the most potent means of pleasure. Wherefore, then, not compass them? And why not corrupt our neighbour's wife, if we may do it secretly? and also, if the husband talk nonsense about it, let us fling him out! If you will be a true and perfect philosopher, and obedient to your own doctrines, thus

must you do; but if you do not, you differ no whit from us that are called Stoics. For truly we ourselves say one thing and do another; we speak fair and honest things, and do vile ones. But the opposite distemper will be yours — a vile creed and honourable deeds.

And you think, God help you! of a city of Epicureans? I do not marry. Nor I; for it is not right to marry, nor beget children, nor take part in public affairs.

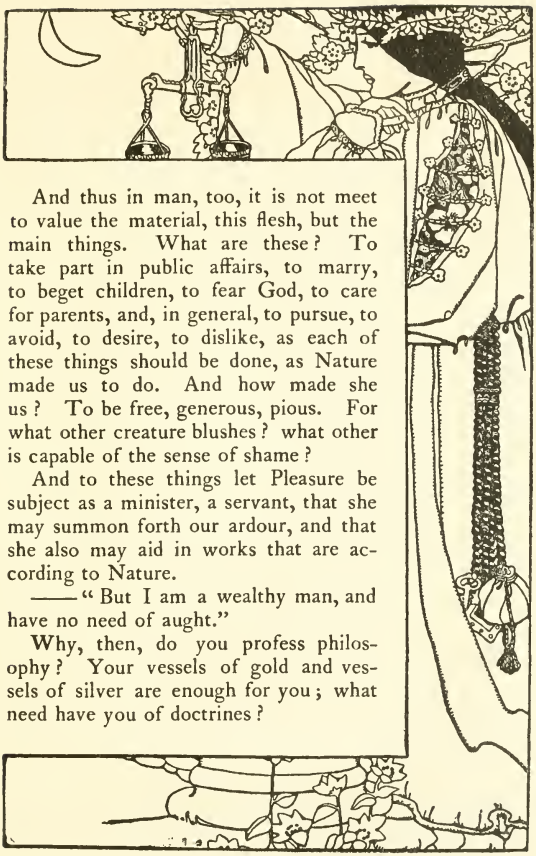
What will come to pass then? Whence shall we have citizens? who shall educate them? who shall be the overseer of youth? who the director of gymnastics? and how shall the youth be trained up? as the Lacedæmonians? or as the Athenians?

Take me a youth, and bring him up after these doctrines of yours! Evils are they, subversive of States, mischievous to households, unbecoming to women.



Abandon them, man! You dwell in a chief city; it is your part to rule, to judge righteously, to refrain from other men's goods; nor must any woman seem beautiful to you save your own wife, nor vessel of gold or silver. Seek for doctrines in harmony with these words, from which setting out you may with gladness abandon things so potent to attract and overcome. But if beside the seduction of these things we have sought out some philosophy like this that pushes us toward them, and confirms us in them, what shall come of it?

In the graver's work, which is the chief thing? the silver or the art? The substance of the hand is flesh, but the main things are the works of the hand. The obligations, therefore, are also three — those that concern us, first, in that we are; and second, as we are; and third, the main things themselves.

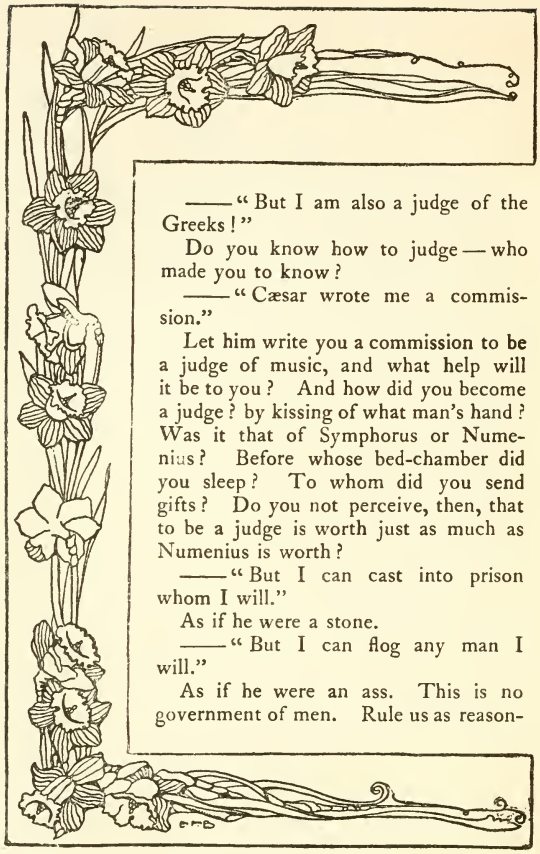


And thus in man, too, it is not meet to value the material, this flesh, but the main things. What are these? To take part in public affairs, to marry, to beget children, to fear God, to care for parents, and, in general, to pursue, to avoid, to desire, to dislike, as each of these things should be done, as Nature made us to do. And how made she us? To be free, generous, pious. For what other creature blushes? what other is capable of the sense of shame?

And to these things let Pleasure be subject as a minister, a servant, that she may summon forth our ardour, and that she also may aid in works that are according to Nature.

—— "But I am a wealthy man, and have no need of aught."

Why, then, do you profess philosophy? Your vessels of gold and vessels of silver are enough for you; what need have you of doctrines?



—— "But I am also a judge of the Greeks!"

Do you know how to judge — who made you to know?

—— "Cæsar wrote me a commission."

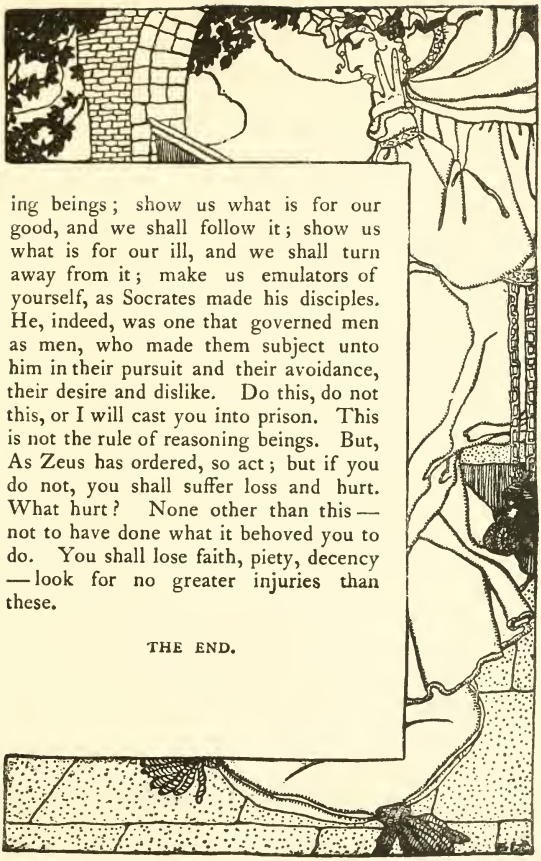
Let him write you a commission to be a judge of music, and what help will it be to you? And how did you become a judge? by kissing of what man's hand? Was it that of Symphorus or Numenius? Before whose bed-chamber did you sleep? To whom did you send gifts? Do you not perceive, then, that to be a judge is worth just as much as Numenius is worth?

—— "But I can cast into prison whom I will."

As if he were a stone.

—— "But I can flog any man I will."

As if he were an ass. This is no government of men. Rule us as reason-



ing beings; show us what is for our good, and we shall follow it; show us what is for our ill, and we shall turn away from it; make us emulators of yourself, as Socrates made his disciples. He, indeed, was one that governed men as men, who made them subject unto him in their pursuit and their avoidance, their desire and dislike. Do this, do not this, or I will cast you into prison. This is not the rule of reasoning beings. But, As Zeus has ordered, so act; but if you do not, you shall suffer loss and hurt. What hurt? None other than this — not to have done what it behoved you to do. You shall lose faith, piety, decency — look for no greater injuries than these.

THE END.

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